ANNOTATIONS
ON THE
BOOK
OF
Eccleſiaſtes.

By Bp: Reynolds.

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ECCLESIASTES,

OR,

The *Preacher.*

The Argument.

THe *Author of this Book both by the Style, and by the Title of it appeareth to have been* Solomon, *ſince no other Son of* David *was King in* Jeruſalem, *but he. He ſeemeth to have written it in his old Age, when he took a more ſerious view of his paſt Life. The Honours, pleaſures, wealth, wiſdome, he had ſo abundantly enjoyed: The Errors and miſcarriages which he had fallen into: the large experience, and many obſervations he had made, of things Natural, Moral, Domeſtical, Civil, Senſual, Divine: the Curious and Critical inquiry he had made after true happineſſe, and what Contribution all things under the Sun could afford thereun-*

to. Concerning which, He doth, 1. *In the general discover the utter vanity and insufficiency of all things here below to make a man Blessed, in regard of their mutable nature, of their weaknesse and disproportion to the Soul of Man: of the weariness which is contracted by the studying of them: and the impossibility of ever drawing from them more then hath been formerly extracted; and consequently the fruitlesse attempt of any that should ever after go about to receive satisfaction from them.* 2. *He demonstrateth this General Proposition touching the most Vain Vanity of all things under the Sun, by an Induction of those particulars, from which, above all others, men usually expect the greatest Contentment. Those are,* 1. *Wisdom and Knowledg both natural and moral, for inquiry whereinto no man was ever furnished with greater abilities and stronger inclinations in himself; or with more fitting provisions and assistants from without, then* Solomon *was, in regard of the greatnesse of his dignity and estate; and yet after all he concludeth, That Wisdome and Knowledge do but encrease Grief and Sorrow, so far are they from bringing such blessedness to the Soul, as may fully satisfie the desires thereof.* 2. *Pleasures and Delights, which he had as much advantage by his greatnesse to Enjoy, and by his wisdome to Examine, as ever any other*

other man ſhould have: and yet all the content he expected from them, did end in hatred of them, and deſpair of ever mending his condition by them. 3. *Honour, greatneſſe, and power in the world, concerning which, he ſheweth that it is ſo far from making men happy, as that without the fear of God to correct and temper it, it is the occaſion of much wickedneſſe to thoſe that have it, and of much miſery to thoſe that ſuffer under it: It uſually breaking forth into oppreſſion and violence, whereby men in power carry themſelves like beaſts towards their brethren, and ſhall themſelves dye like beaſts, undeſired, and unlamented. It being likewiſe matter of much diſcouragement to men that are oppreſſed by it, making them weary of their lives, careleſs of their labours, reſolved rather upon quiet idleneſſe, then upon envied imployments; and to get what they can privately to themſelves, then having been publickly uſeful, to be repayed with no other Rewards then wrong and danger: by which means Society and Community of ſervices amongſt men, ſo greatly beneficial to publick intereſt, are obſtructed and diſſolved.* 4. *An outward form of Religion and of Divine Worſhip, into which fooliſh men by carnal confidence, and ſuperficial performances, do alſo put diverſe vanities, and make even Gods ſervice unuſeful to their*

Happineſſe. 5. *Riches and great Poſſeſſions, which are ſo far from ſatisfying the heart of man, as that they occaſion more cares, leſſe ſleep, leſſe quiet, are ſnares and occaſions of much Hurt to the owners of them, who, living, poſſeſs them with ſorrow; and dying, part with them with wrath and indignation: Having little benefit by them in their life, as having not power to enjoy them: nor in their death any comfort from them, as leaving them to they know not whom, being not at all exempted by them either from miſery or mortality.*

And having thus diſcovered the vanity of the principal things from whence the Heart of man might have expected ſatisfaction: He doth thereupon preſcribe many excellent means for healing and abating of that Vanity, and for procuring tranquility unto the Mind, and peace and comfort to the life of a man. Such are, Contentation of heart in the ſweet and free Enjoyment of all outward Bleſſings, with thanksgiving, and in the fear of God. Quiet and Humble Acquieſcency under the holy and powerful providence of God, in all the Events which befall us in the World. Sincerity of heart in his worſhip, and prudent Piety in our vowes, prayers, and addreſſes unto him. Patience of ſpirit under all the oppreſſions we meet with in the world. A compoſed preparedneſs

of

of mind to undergo ſorrows and afflictions. Prudent and pious moderation of ſpirit in our behaviour towards all men, that ſo we may preſerve our names from Calumnie, and our perſons from danger. Meekneſs, Charity, Patience towards ſuch as offend, conſidering Common frailty, and our own weakneſſe. Sobriety of mind, contenting our ſelves with a meaſure of wiſdome and knowledge, and not buſying our ſelves with things too high for us. Practical Prudence, which may render us beautiful in the eyes of others. Loyalty and obedience towards Magiſtrates, that our lives may not be made uncomfortable by their diſpleaſure. Wiſdome to diſcern of time and judgment. Preparedneſs of heart againſt inevitable evils. Submiſſion to the Holy and invincible Providence of God, admiring his Works, adoring his Judgments. Joyful fruition of Comforts. Conſcienable and induſtrious walking in our particular Callings. Wiſdome how to carry our ſelves amidſt the many Caſualties which meet us in the World, ſo as that we may by our loyalty towards our Superiours decline the danger of diſpleaſure from them: and by our Charity to Inferiours, lay up a good foundation for our ſelves, againſt the time to come. Laſtly, Moderation in the uſe of Comforts here: And preparation by the fear of God, and keeping of his Command-

dements, for death and Judgment hereafter. That by these means as our Life is sweet, so our Death may be welcome. That the Piety of our Youth may help us to bear the Infirmities of our Age, and to lift up our Heads in the day of Redemption.

CHAP. I.

IN this Chapter we have, 1. The Inscription of the whole Book, ver. 1. wherein the Author thereof is described by his Natural Relation, *the Son of David*; His Civil Relation, *King in Jerusalem*; and his Church-Relation, a *Preacher*; or a Penitent Soul, returning into the bosome of the Church, from whence by many gross miscarriages he had secluded himself. 2. A general Proposition, setting forth the utter insufficiency of all things under the Sun to make a man Blessed, and the extream vanity which is in them, in relation unto such an End, (however otherwise useful and beneficial they may be, within their own sphere, when sanctified, to sweeten and comfort the life of a man, who hath placed his Happiness in God:) insomuch, that all the labour which is taken to extract happiness from the Creature, will be wholly fruitless, and without any

any profit at all, verſ. 2,3. 3. The proof of this general Propoſition;

1. By mans mortality, whereby he is quickly removed from the fruition of them; whereas that which makes a man happy ought for ever to abide with him, verſ. 4.

2. By the Inſtability of all other Creatures, They come and preſently they go, and are never in a fixed condition: If comeing, they make happy; then departing, they leave miſerable again. By which imſtability of the creatures, being themſelves continually unſatisfied, is implyed, 1. Their weakneſſe to miniſter ſatisfaction to ſo noble a creature as man, verſ. 5,6,7. 2. The reſtleſſe and fruitleſſe Labour which is taken in ſeeking ſatisfaction from things which only affect the ſences, ſince the Eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear with hearing, verſ. 8.

3. By the continual Viciſſitudes and returns of the ſame things, which having failed once, yea often before, are never likely to afford further ſupplyes, then already they have done (which indeed are none) towards the happineſſe of a man. And therefore except they can miniſter ſome new matter of ſatisfaction to the ſoul, which was never found in them before, and which indeed they will never do; impoſſible it is, but the

ſame diſappointment which others have met with, muſt likewiſe befall thoſe, who ſhall from the ſame things ſeek for that, which the wiſeſt of men heretofore were never able to extract from them, verſ. 9, 10, 11.

4. By Solomons own experience, who by the dignity of his place, by the inclination of his heart, by the greatneſs of his wiſdome and learning, and by the abundance of his wealth, was able to go as far as any other man could in this enquiry after true happineſſe; and when he had ſet himſelf to make a moſt Critical and Accurate ſearch into all things here below, doth conclude of them all in general, and of the moſt excellent of them all in particular, namely of wiſdome and knowledge, That they are not onely *Vanity*, and ſo unable to ſatisfie the Soul, but are further *Vexation of ſpirit*, as cauſing much grief and ſorrow to that heart which is immoderately converſant about them.

Verſ. 1. *THe words of the Preacher, the ſon of David, King in Jeruſalem.*] Theſe words are the Inſcription of this Book, ſetting down the Author thereof by his Parentage, dignity, and deſign in this writing. The Author is prefixed

fixed, as owning and avowing the doctrine therein contained: His dignity is added, to set on the drift and scope of the Book the better. A King. Such a King, *the son of David*, so piously educated, 1 Reg. 2. 2, 3. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Prov. 31. 1. so solemnly by God selected and separated to that Honour, 2 Sam. 7. 12——15. 2 Chron. 1. 1. so admirably endowed with inward wisdome, whereby he was fitted, as in special for the work of Government, 1 Reg. 3. 12, 28. so likewise for all natural and moral inquiries, 1 Reg. 10. 3. 1 Reg. 4. 29——34. So rightly furnished with all outward means to further such an inquiry, 2 Chron. 9. 22. so fixed and wholly taken up with it, sometimes vitiously taking his fill of outward pleasures, 1 Reg. 11. 1. sometimes critically, purposely setting himself to extract the quintessence of all sublunary perfections, Eccles. 1. 17. and lastly, being instructed by God, an inspired person, and called out to publish this as a Preacher of so necessary a truth to Gods people; In all these respects, there is much Authority added to what the Wise man delivers in this Book, and he doth hereby excite the attention of the people thereunto, as unto the words of a penitent Convert, and of a wise, holy, and potent Prince.

The words of the Preacher] Some read it as a proper name, the words of Koheleth ſon of David, and ſo would have it to be one of the names of Solomon, as Jedidiah, 2 Sam. 12. 25. Lemuel, Prov. 31. 1. It is uſually out of the Greek rendred *Eccleſiaſtes*, or *the Preacher*: as if Solomon had publickly delivered it to the Congregation, (as we find ſometimes Kings and extraordinary perſons have ſpoken to the people in their Church aſſemblies, 1 Reg. 8. 1. 12.) But it ſeemeth chiefly to ſignifie Solomons repentance, and re-uniting himſelf to the congregation of Gods people, from whence by his idolatries and other apoſtaſies he had departed: and ſo the ſenſe is, The words of the ſoul, or perſon congregated or gathered unto the Church, or congregation of Saints, Pſ. 89. 6. *viz.* of the ſon of David, King in Jeruſalem. Some were not to be admitted into the congregation at all, Deut. 23. 3. Nehem. 13. 1. and others by idolatry and apoſtacy, did ſhut out themſelves from the aſſemblies of the Saints, by joyning themſelves to other gods. Now here Solomon doth by ſolemn and ſerious repentance return into the boſome of that congregation, from which by his idolatry he had departed, and turned his heart from the Lord God of Iſrael, 1 King. 11. 9. And doth therein, and thereunto declare the

vanity

vanity of all other waies, ſave only the fear and worſhip of the Lord, unto true happineſs. And herein he imitateth his father David, whoſe name is haply here for that cauſe mentioned, that as David being converted did publiſh his repentance unto the Church, in that ſolemn penitential Pſalm, Pſal. 51. So his ſon, having fallen from his integrity, did take the ſame courſe to give glory to God in the great congregation, Pſal. 40. 10. and to make known his repentance to all the Church, that thereby he might glorifie God, and ſtrengthen his brethren. Whence he frequently in this book giveth himſelf this title, as of a penitent convert, Chap. 1. 12. & 7. 29. & 12. 8, 9, 10. The word is a Participle or Adjective of the feminine gender, yet joyned here to a verb maſculine, as elſewhere to a verb feminine, Chap. 7. 27. There, becauſe of the grammatical congruity, Here, with relation to the perſon thereby ſignified. They uſe to ſupply the ſenſe with the word *nepheſh*, ſoul, which is mentioned preſently after it, Chap. 7. 27, 28. and ſo that word is elſewhere ſupplyed, 2 Sam. 13. 29. ſo where it is ſaid, Gen. 49. 6. My glory be not thou united unto their aſſembly; the Noun is maſculine, the verb feminine, to ſignifie that by glory, the ſame was to be underſtood in that clauſe, which was expreſſed

preſſed by the feminine Noun, the ſoul, in the former clauſe: and ſo glory ſeems elſewhere to ſignifie the ſoul of a man, Pſ. 30. 12. If it be inquired what may be the cauſe why Solomon doth not prefix his proper name to this Book, as to the other two of the Proverbs and Canticles: Though it be not neceſſary to be curious in queſtions of this nature, yet this may be inoffenſively conjectured; 1. That he ſeems hereby to intimate, That by his former ſins he had as it were forfeited his name of Peace, and ſo we find that by reaſon of thoſe his ſins, God ſtirred up adverſaries againſt him, 1 King. 11. 14, 23. 2. To note his ſincerity, who now choſe to be known rather by the name of a penitent convert, than of a peaceable Prince, as if he who had troubled Iſrael by his ſins, did no longer deſerve his name of peace, as the prodigal ſaid to his father, I am no more worthy to be called thy ſon. So in Scripture, men have taken new names ſuitable to a new condition, Gen. 52. 28. Ruth. 1. 20. Mar. 3. 16, 17. Nehem. 9. 7. The other additions likewiſe to his name of penitence may ſeem to be looked on by him as aggravations of his ſins. 1. That he was the ſon of David, a godly father, who had given him ſuch holy education, who had provided him materials to build Gods houſe, and greatly encouraged him

him to advance the worſhip of the Lord, who had been an example to him to take heed of falling into groſs ſins, that the ſon of ſuch a father ſhould fall ſo ſouly. 2. That he was a King on his fathers throne, and that not by right of inheritance, but by ſpecial deſignation from the Lord, who had ſingled him out above his brethren, and had appeared unto him twice, & gave him wiſdome and princely endowments for ſo great a place, that he ſhould defile the throne whereunto he had been ſo graciouſly advanced, and from thence give to all the people ſo ſad an example of ſenſuality and apoſtacy. 3. That he was a King in Jeruſalem, an holy City, where was Gods throne as well as the thrones of the houſe of David, that he ſhould defile the Lords land, and his dwelling place: Theſe were conſiderations worthy for ſuch a penitent to have his eyes on, for his greater humiliation. Thereby teaching us, 1. That the ſins of the child are greatly aggravated by the godlineſs of the parent, Jer. 22. 15, 16, 17. 2. That the ſins of the child are greatly aggravated by the falls and miſcarriages of the parent, Dan. 5. 18——23. 3. That ſins are greatly aggravated by the dignities and priviledges of thoſe that commit them, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8, 9. Deut. 32. 12——19. Amos 2. 9——13. 3. 2. 4. That the greater the perſon

person is that sinneth, whereby the scandal to the Church is likewise the greater, the more solemn ought his repentance to be, Numb. 12. 14, 15, 16. 2 Chron. 33. 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19. 5. That the power of grace is exceeding great, which can subdue the hearts of the greatest men unto the heaviest yoke of publick and solemn repentance, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, 6. And further, from the description of the person, and his writi g of this book, we may observe, 1. That eminency of wisdome without the continued assistance of grace, cannot keep a man from gross and foul lapses. Never a wiser man than Solomon, and never any Saint fell into more foolish lusts. God is pleased sometimes to suffer men to fall into such sins, the contrary graces whereunto they had most eminently been adorned withal. As David, a most spiritual man, into fleshly lust; Lot, whose righteous soul had been vexed at the filthy conversation of the Sodomites, into another sort of unnatural impurity by incest of his daughters: Job, into impatience; Moses, the meekest man alive, into great passion of mind, Numb. 20. 10. Peter, the boldest Disciple, into base fear and cowardise of spirit in denying his Master. 2. That height of honour, and abundance of wealth, are sore snares and temptations, even to the wisest

wiſeſt and moſt excellent men, Mark 10.23, 25. 1 Tim. 6. 9. Iſa. 39. 1, 2. 3. That repentance ſets a man moſt againſt that evil by which he had moſt diſhonoured God, and been foiled under temptation. Abundance of knowledge and treaſures drew Solomons heart too far from the Lord, and being converted, he ſets himſelf moſt to diſcern the emptineſs and vanity of them. So Zacheus, Luke 19. 8. And Mary Magdalen, Luke 7. 37, 38. 4. That the Lord maketh the falls of his ſervants very beneficial unto his Church; Davids fall was an occaſion of his penning ſome excellent Pſalms, and Solomons of writing this excellent book, ſetting forth the vanity of thoſe worldly things, whereby even wiſe men are many times drawn away from God. 5. That the Saints, after ſome great offence given by their falls to the Church, make it their buſineſs, upon their repentance, to do ſome more notable and eminent ſervice to the Church: as Peter who had been moſt fearful in denying Chriſt, was after moſt forward in preaching him, and moſt bold in the profeſſion of him, Act. 1. 15. & 2. 14. & 3. 12. & 4. 8. & 5. 29.

V. 2. *Vanity of vanities, ſaith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, All is vanity.*] The ſcope of the wiſe man is, to direct us in the right way to true happineſs. And this he doth,

doth, first negatively, assuring us that it is not to be found in any thing under the sun. Secondly, affirmatively, that it is to be found only in God and his service. For the former, this is the last issue and result of all that curious inquiry which Solomon made into the utmost excellencies of creatures here below. He was furnished above all other men with all variety of requisites for such a work, set himself critically about it, to dissect as it were, and take a thorow view of the creature, and having so done, this is the upshot, that All is nothing but very vanity. And this he doth in a vehement and pathetical manner, that it may be the more observed. He doth not say, All is vain; but in the abstract, (which is much more emphatical) All is vanity: Not vanity only, but vanity of vanities, that is, extreme vanity. The Genetive case of the Noun, according to the use of that tongue, supplying an Adjective of the superlative degree, Gen. 9. 25. Cant. 1. 1. Hos. 10. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 15. And this proposition he doubleth and repeateth again; thereby intimating, 1. The unquestionable certainty of it, Gen. 40. 32. Isa. 8. 9. 2. The great consequence of it, as being a truth necessary to be inculcated, that it might make the deeper impression on the heart, Ezek. 21. 27. Psal. 62. 11. Rev. 18. 2. 3. The natural

ral unaptneſs which is in us to give credit to it, or to take notice of it, except it be thus inculcated upon us, Jer. 22. 29. 4. The earneſt affection of the wiſe man in preſſing this neceſſary truth, with which he himſelf in his repentance was ſo deeply affected. Repetitions argue vehemency of affections, and earneſt contending for the things ſo repeated, Ezek. 16. 6. Luk. 23.21. Gal. 1. 8, 9. Pſal. 93. 3.

And becauſe it might be thought to be true only of ſome things, and that ſome other things which Solomon had not looked ſo narrowly into, might haply have more excellency in them, therefore he addeth, to prevent this objection, that **All is vanity.** All, not ſimply, but with limitation to the ſubject matter of which he treateth in this Book; Every thing ſeverally, all things joyntly. Not any one thing alone, not all things collectively and together are able to ſatisfie the ſoul, and to make it happy. It is true, the works of God are all good and excellent, ſought out of all thoſe that have pleaſure in them. But good in their kind and order; of excellent uſe to ſet forth the glory, power, wiſdome and goodneſs of God, and of neceſſary ſervice for the uſe of man. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Yet withal vain in other reſpects; 1. Comparatively vain, when put in the ballance

lance with God, and heavenly things, Job 15. 15. Isa. 40. 15, 16, 17. 2. Vain by that superinduced vanity, whereunto they are subjected by the sin of man, Rom. 8. 20. 3. Vain in order unto happiness, the full possession, the most vigorous fruition of them, cannot bring real satisfaction to the soul of a man; Man himself, the noblest of them all, and that at his best estate, being altogether vanity, Psal. 39. 5, 6, 11. Psal. 62. 9. & 144. 3, 4. They are vain. 1. In regard of their unprofitableness unto such an use, Jer. 16. 19. 2. In regard of their falseness and deceitfulness to those who lean upon them, Job 15——20. Ps. 31. 7. & 62. 10. Jon. 2. 8. 3. In regard of their instability and impermanency, as being under the bondage of corruption, Rom. 8. 20. 1 Cor. 7. 30, 31. Ps. 39. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 18. And in all these respects useless unto happiness; for that which makes a man happy, must bear a thorow proportion to all the wants, desires and capacities of the soul, and must withal be of an equal duration and continuance therewith; neither of which is to be found in any worldly thing.

saith the Preacher] Both by inspiration, as a Pen-man of the holy Ghost: and by experience, as one who had learned it dearly, and to his cost. He sets his name as in the in-

inſcription to the whole book, ſo here, a ſecond time to this, which is the ſum of the whole book, confidently owning the truth thereof; as ſometimes the Apoſtle addeth his name emphatically, to ſet on what he affirmeth or deſireth, 2 Cor. 10. 1. Gal. 5. 2. Philem. ver. 9, 19. So 1 Pet. 5. 1. 1 Joh. 1. 1, 3. They who ſpeak to the Church, ſhould do it experimentally, and from demonſtration of the truth to their own hearts, that they may be confidently able to own, and to avow what they ſay.

V. 3. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the ſun?*] Or, what remaineth and abideth with a man of all his labour? What is added to him, or what more hath he by it?

of all his labour] The word imports toylſome and troubleſome labour, and ſo rendred by the Septuagint, μοχθῳ; and by Aquila, κόπῳ.

under the ſun] This may relate to either paſſage of the verſe, either, what remaineth to a man under the Sun; that is, nothing under the Sun will tarry or abide with him. Or, of all the labour which he hath laboured under the Sun; or in relation to worldly matters here below. There is a converſation and a labour in order to things above the Sun, which will remain with a man, and profit him,

Phil.

Phil. 3. 20. Col. 3. 1, 2. Joh. 6. 27. But labour in earthly things will not do ſo. We are ſaid to labour under the Sun, becauſe earthly labour is done by the light of the Sun, Pſal. 104. 22, 23. Joh. 9. 4. and becauſe by that light we are more comforted in the fruition of them, as Eccleſ. 11. 7. and becauſe the benefit we expect from our labours, is wrought inſtrumentally by the warmth and influence of the Sun, Deut. 33. 14. Here then the wiſe man proveth his general propoſition. Whatſoever is unprofitable and periſhing, is very vanity: All things under the Sun, about which the anxious and toylſome labour of man is converſant, are unprofitable and periſhing, for nothing of them will remain unto him, or abide with him. Therefore they are all vain. And this he propoundeth by way of interrogation, which makes the negative more unqueſtionable, as appealing to the conſcience of every man, and challenging any man to diſprove it. The Scripture uſually denies more emphatically by way of interrogation; as Gen. 30. 2. 2 Sam. 7. 5. compared with 1 Chron. 17. 4. Matth. 16. 26. Zech. 1. 5. And he further inſiſteth on this point as certain and neceſſary, Chap. 2. 11. & 3. 9. & 5. 15. The Sum is this; 1. Whatever fruit we have from worldly things, we get it with very hard and toylſome

labour,

labour, either of the mind or body, Gen. 3. 17, 19. Job 5. 7. 2. However that labour be uſeful and ſubſervient to our temporal condition, yet it is wholly unprofitable in order unto happineſs. 3. The foundation of this unprofitableneſs, is; 1. It doth not cauſe a man to excel; it adds nothing of real worth unto him at all, Jam. 2. 1——6. Eccl. 9. 14, 16. Pſ. 49. 12, 13, 20. 2. It doth not abide with him; all the comfort it brings, is dying comfort; it ſtops at the grave, and goes no further. Now nothing is profitable to a man which he cannot tranſport beyond the grave; which he doth not carry with him into another world, Job. 1. 21. & 21. 21. Pſal. 49. 14, 17. Joh. 6. 27. 1 Tim. 6. 7. Thoſe works are beneficial which follow a man, Rev. 14. 13. therefore we muſt lay out our labour upon a life that abides and abounds, Joh. 10. 10. Iſa. 55. 2. and not labour in the fire, and for every vanity, Hab. 2. 13. Luk. 12. 6. Matth. 24. 38, 39.

V. 4. *One generation goeth, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever*] By Generation is meant the time wherein a Body of men do live and continue together, ſo we read of this or that Generation, Luk. 21. 32. Heb. 3. 10. the ſecond, third, tenth generation or ages of men yet to come, Deut. 23. 2, 3, 8. A mans own generation,

or

or ages of men yet to come, Deut. 23. 2, 3, 8. A mans own generation, or the age wherein he liveth, Acts 12. 36. There is a constant succession of men to one another, a fixed time, as the daies of an hireling, Job 7. 1.——10. & 14. 14. The inward principles of change and mortality are alwaies working, and life is like a shepherds tent, which doth not continue in one place or stay, Isa. 68. 12.

But the earth abideth or standeth for ever] Continueth much longer than the men that are upon it; for ever, noteth often a long time, so long as the present course and order of nature is to continue, Ps. 119. 90. so long as such or such an administration lasteth, Gen. 9. 12. 1 Sam. 2. 30. 1 Sam. 13. 13. otherwise we know the earth is to be changed, and in some sense at the least to pass away, as now the inhabitants thereof do, Matth. 24. 35. Psal. 102. 25, 27. There seems to be a double sense in the words, both Consonant to the present argument. 1. That man cannot be happy by any thing which is here below, in regard of his transitory condition, fathers going, and children succeeding; a mans labour haply may enrich him, or bring him to honour, but it cannot lengthen out his daies beyond one generation, and then he and all his acquirements must part, and in this

this reſpect, the earth on which he treads, is in a condition better than himſelf, for it abideth to the end. 2. Man ſeeking happineſs from the earth and earthly things, muſt needs be diſappointed of his expectation, becauſe he paſſeth away, and the earth ſtaies behind him. If he could carry the earth along with him, he might haply promiſe himſelf his wonted contentments, but the earth abides where it was, when he goeth from it, and can enjoy it no more, Job. 7. 10. Pſ. 49. 17. Here then we may obſerve. Firſt, a determinate time prefixed to the life, ſtates, honours, offices of men, at uttermoſt they are but for one generation, wherein every man hath his ſervice to do, his warfare to accompliſh, his race to run, Job 7. 1. & 14. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 7. Act. 13. 36. Secondly, the providence of God in continuing the ſeveral ſucceeding ages of men, that he may ſtill have a ſeed to ſerve him, that one generation may declare his works to another. That the admirable contexture of the works of providence, carried along by pieces, through various ſucceſſions of men, may at laſt moſt gloriouſly ſet forth his wiſdome, juſtice and goodneſs, Pſal. 22. 30, 31, and 102. 18. Iſa. 38. 19. Eccleſ. 8. 17. Thirdly, a mans labour under the ſun, is for himſelf and his poſterity:

his labour about heavenly things will abide with, and benefit himself for ever. Fourthly, so long as the generations of men continue, so long doth the Lord by his decree continue the earth for their supportance and salvation, because he hath given it to the children of men, Deut, 32. 8. and when the generations of men are ended, it shall then appear that the whole Creation was subject to vanity, and to the bondage of corruption, Rom. 8.20.2 Pet. 3.5, 7.

V. 5. *The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose*] Or, panteth towards the place. A metaphor from one who runs earnestly to some mark, or presseth forward with strong desire to something he would attain, Psal. 119. 131. Job 7. 2. A like expression, Psal. 19. 6, 7. and 104. 19. whereby is signified an unwearied, yet constant and regular motion founded in a Covenant or ordinance of Heaven, Jer. 31. 35, 36, and 33. 25. Job 38. 33. from which without a special and extraordinary restraint from God (as Josh. 10. 12. Isa. 38. 8. Job 9. 7.) it never varieth. Having thus affirmed of all things under the sun that they are vain, he here beginneth with the sun it self, which

which doth as it were weary it ſelf out of breath with continual motion. 1. If it did bring happineſs to a man in its riſing, it would remove it again in its ſetting. 2. Though the earth abideth for ever, and the ſun moveth regularly over it with its warmth, and the winds blow on it to refreſh the fruits thereof, Cant. 4. 16. and the waters paſs through it to make it fruitful, Gen. 2. 10, 11. yet all this can benefit a man only in his own generation, but cannot convey any durable happineſs unto him. 3. The earth abides alwaies alike, the ſun moves, the windes blow, the rivers run after one conſtant manner in one age as in another. If they have never yet made any happy, they never will, becauſe they do minister but the ſame comforts again. 4. Morality and mutability here is as natural to man, as ſtanding to the earth, the motions of the ſun, the circuits of the windes, the flowing of the Rivers: ſo that it is as impoſſible for him to be happy by creatures on earth, as it is to alter the covenant of day and night: or to ſtop the regular and invariable courſes of the Heavens. 5. The ſun runs his courſe, obſerves his times of riſing and ſetting, and though he ſet, he riſeth in equal glory again, but when man goes, he returns hither no more, Job 14. 7, 12.

6. Obſerve the conſtant and ſteady obedience of other creatures to that law of working, which was primitively implanted in them, they act as it were knowingly, Pſal. 104. 19. willingly, Rom. 8. 20. vigorouſly with joy and ſtrength, Pſal. 19. 5. and thereby ſhame thoſe who have indeed a principle of light and reaſon, but act not in conformity unto them.

V. 6. *The winde goeth towards the South and turneth about unto the North*, &c. As the ſun, ſo the windes have their courſes, whereby is noted the uncertainty of outward things, if they pleaſe in their coming they muſt diſquiet in their departing, where as the matter of happineſs muſt be ever preſent and permanent. Here we may alſo note the wiſe providence of God in the circuit of the windes and other ſublunary creatures which he bringeth out of his treaſure, and directeth as it pleaſeth him for the uſes of men, one while making them helpful to one part of the earth, and another while to another, Pſal. 135. 7. Job 37. 7. & 38. 22. Jer. 10. 13. Deut. 28. 12. Pſal. 78. 26. Gen. 8. 1. Exod. 8. 1. & 14. 21. He ſeeth likewiſe to have reſpect to thoſe winds which in ſome parts of the world, have a very regular and uniform motion, in ſome moneths of the year, blowing conſtan-

out of one quarter, and in others, out of another. The words [going, circuiting, whirling about, returning] are uſed to ſhew the reſtleſs and unquiet nature of theſe things, their buſie and ſpeedy motion, as if they were ever out of their place; all which ſhew how full of vanity they are, and repreſent the diſquiet agitations of the mind of man, till it fix upon him that is immutable.

V. 7. *All rivers run into the ſea, yet the ſea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.*] Though rivers haſtily run into the ſea, as into their ciſtern, yet the ſea is not filled, ſo as to ſwell above the earth, or overflow the bounds within which God hath decreed it to ſtay, Job 38. 8.——11. Pſal. 104. 8, 9. Jer. 5. 22. The reaſon whereof is, becauſe there is a perpetual and proportionable return, as faſt as by ſome channels waters go from their fountains to the ſea, by others they return from the ſea into the earth again. Thus, which way ever we caſt our eyes, we every where meet with evidences of inconſtancy and mutability here below, as teſtimonies of that vanity which all things under the ſun are ſubject unto. 1. By the continual motions of theſe creatures, he ſeemeth to deſcribe the reſtleſnes of the mind of man, in enquiring after good.

2. The dis-satisfaction which it every where meeteth withall, finding no reason to rest or stay there, whither it had formerly hasted with greatest speed. As all rivers cannot fill the sea, so all creatures cannot fill the heart of man. It moves every way, forward and backward, to the South and to the North, from one content unto another for full satisfaction, but can find none, Psal. 39.6. & 74. 11,19. Prov. 19.21. Luk. 10. 41.

V. 8. *All things are full of labour, man cannot utter it: The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*] All things, to wit, all these and the like things. This is a close of the former argument. Having shewed the unquiet motion of the sun, windes, rivers, he here concludeth his Induction of particulars, with a general assertion, that as it was in them, so it is in all things else, no man is able with words to run over all particulars, but as it is in some, so is it in the rest which cannot be numbred. They are said to be ful of labour or wearines, because they weary out man in his studies and endeavours about them, Gen. 3. 17,19. Psal. 127.

2. Here is also another argument proving the main proposition, whatever things bring toylsome labour and wearines with them cannot make a man happy, but are altogether vain as to such a purpose: But all things un-

do

der the Sun do bring unto him that is converſant about them toylſome labour and wearineſs, therefore they cannot make men happy. This toyl and wearineſs doth not onely appear in grievous and unpleaſing labour, whereunto men are againſt their wills compelled, Job. 5. 7. Lam. 5. 5. Jer. 20. 18. nor onely in thoſe labours which the Lord is pleaſed to blaſt and fruſtrate of an expected end, when men labour as it were in the fire, and reap no fruit of all their pains, Habak. 2. 13. Hag. 1. 6. Levit. 26. 20. Iſa. 17. 11. & 55. 2. Eccleſ. 5. 16. Luk. 5. 5. But it is alſo true of thoſe labours which a man ſets about with greateſt delight and willingneſs, they alſo have wearineſs and ſatiety attending on them; the very honey-comb bringing a loathing with it, Prov. 27. 7. And this general he proveth by a double inſtance. *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear with hearing*] and accordingly, it is in all other numberleſs particulars. A man may cloy and tire out theſe faculties, before he can at all ſatisfie them. He ſeemeth to inſtance in theſe rather then others, 1. Becauſe the exerciſe of them is eaſieſt, and leaſt labour is ſpent in the uſing of them; there is not much force or ſtreſs put forth in ſeeing an amiable and beautifull object, or in hearing ſome excellent muſick. 2 Becauſe they are

the most curious and inquisitive senses. 3. Because their delights are sweetest: as being senses which are neerest cognation unto reason, and are principal instruments and handmaids to the soul in her noblest operations. Now if the most spiritual, unwearied, rational senses cannot be satisfied, but that they are pricked with further desires of new objects to delight them, Acts 17. 21. or satiated and glutted with the excess of what did delight them before; how much more is this true in those other faculties, where there is more labour in pursuing their objects, and more loathing in fruition of them, Prov. 27. 20. And this is such labour and weariness as no man can utter it; no man can express how many wayes any one faculty may be wearied out, nor recount all those objects, which when they minister some delight, do yet leave no satisfaction behind them. As the hippiness which we expect in God, cannot be uttered, 1 Cor. 2. 9. 2 Cor. 12. 4. so the labour and weariness which the mind contracteth by excessive search into the creatures, cannot be uttered neither.

V. 9, 10, 11. *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the Sun*, &c.] The substance of these verses is this, If no man hath

ever

ever hitherto been able to find out happineſs in the creature, let no man think now or hereafter to do it, ſince there is no new thing out of which it may be extracted. All natural cauſes and effects continue as they were at the beginning, Gen. 8. 22. Jer. 31. 35, 36. and all humane and voluntary actions, counſels and ſtudies, having the ſame principles of reaſon to produce them, and the ſame objects to draw them out, are in ſubſtance the ſame now as heretofore. And though ſome diſcoveries of new things have been made, as the Mariners Card, the Art of Printing, Gun-powder, &c. of which learned men have written, yet from defective and inſufficient principles of happineſs, ſuch as all natural things are, no thing, though new, can be ſufficient unto ſuch an End, ſince the particulars cannot afford that which the general hath not comprized within it. As face anſwereth to face in water, ſo the courſes of natural cauſes and effects, and the hearts deſires, counſels of the men in one age, do anſwer unto thoſe of another, Matth. 24. 38, 39. Prov. 27. 19.

V. 10. *Is there any new thing whereof it may be ſaid, See this, It is new?*] This is a challenge to any man to procure any new thing if he can, with a peremptory repeating of the former aſſertion, and denying the

ſucceſs

ſucceſs of any ſuch attempt. He ſpeaketh of ſuch new things as may far ſurpaſs the things which had been diſcovered before, as to be able to ſatisfie the heart, and make it truly bleſſed. And this he confidently denyeth, that any thing can further be extracted out of the womb of nature in order unto humane happineſs more then had been already diſcovered. Men may haply flatter themſelves in their inventions, as if they had invented new things which were not before, and ſuch as may afford more matter of content and ſatisfaction then other men in former ages have found. But he ſhews that this is but a miſtake, for *It hath been already of old time which was before us.*] The diſcoveries of former ages have been as pregnant towards ſatisfaction of the heart, as any of after ages can be.

V. 11. *There is no remembrance of former things, neither ſhall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with thoſe that ſhall come after.*] If new things be found out, as many old things are forgotten, ſo that ſtill the ſtock of nature is as defective towards happineſs in our age, as in another. Shortneſs of life, and narrowneſs of experience, cauſeth us to forget the things which have been before us, which were they all in our diſtinct view, no one thing would occur without

without it's pattern and parallel, at least something as excellent as it in former ages: and as things past are forgotten by us, so things present will be forgotten by those that shall come after us.

Here then we see, 1. The aptness which is in man to nauseate and grow weary of the things which he is used unto, though they be otherwise never so excellent, Num. 11. 6. 2. The wantonness of our hearts in having an itching desire after new things, and such as former ages were unacquainted with, Acts 17. 21. 3. That it is Ignorance and inexperience which maketh things appear new, which indeed are old. 4. That the vanity which our forefathers have found in things here below, is an infallible argument, that we shall find the same, and shall certainly miscarry, if we think to get more satisfaction out of the Creatures, then others have gotten before us, Job. 8. 8, 9. & 15. 18. 5. That new things are not to be looked for under the Sun, or in the course of natural causes and effects: But in a spiritual, and heavenly conversation all things are new, durable, excellent. In the study of Gods Word and wayes, there are ever new and wonderfull things to be discovered, Psal. 119. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 17. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 5. Gods mercies and judgements are wonder-

full,

full, and he doth many times ſtrange things, which neither we nor our fathers have known, Deut. 432—36. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

V. 12, 13. *I the Preacher was King over Iſrael in Jeruſalem. And I gave mine heart to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom, concerning all things that are done under heaven: This ſore travel hath God given to the ſons of men, to be exerciſed therewith.*] Having ſhewed the vanity of things under the Sun in general: He now proceedeth unto ſome ſpecial and principal things, wherein men might be apt to place felicity. And he begins with the knowledge of things natural and humane: ſhewing, that if any man could in that reſpect make himſelf Happy, he himſelf had more means to do it then any other man. And the better to gain belief to what he ſhould deliver, He gives it them upon the word and experience of a Convert, a King, an Inſpired King, a moſt wiſe and Active King, a *King in Jeruſalem*, the ſeat of God; provoked unto this inquiry by the ſtrong inclination of his own heart, by the ſpecial Call and direction of God, by the eye and help of that habitual wiſdome which by prayer he had obtained of God in a more eminent manner then any other man; and by his zeal towards the people of God, and towards his houſe at Jeruſalem. I, being ſuch a perſon,

ſon, ſo compleatly furniſhed with all internal and external advantages, do teſtifie the truth which I have delivered upon mine own moſt exact and accurate tryal, That *All is Vanity.*

I the Preacher] Or the Convert, who am returned by repentance unto the Communion of Saints, from whence by my ſins I had formerly wandred, am able now by ſad experience to ſeal the truth which I have ſo dearly bought, touching the vanity of all outward things. So this Book was the fruit of Solomons Converſion and returning to the boſome of the Church.

was King over Iſrael] This Book therefore was written when he was on his throne, furniſhed with wiſdom from God to manage his Royal Office, and with abundance of wealth to proſecute this inquiry after true happineſs, 1 Reg. 3. 7.—13.

over Iſrael] Gods peculiar people, a wiſe and underſtanding people, Deut. 4. 6, 7. for whoſe good Solomon had ſought his wiſdom, and out of the care of whoſe welfare in ſoul and eſtate, he had made this ſollicitous ſearch.

In Jeruſalem] This being expreſſed thus twice, in this, and in the firſt verſe, hath ſome emphaſis in it. In Jeruſalem was the Houſe of the Lord, and the Teſtimony of Iſrael, Pſal. 122. 1, 2, 3. Here God was in a ſpecial

cial manner present, and might most comfortably be sought, Psal. 132. 13, 14. There were continual attendances of the Priests, officers, and wise men about the Temple, 1 Chron. 25. 26. There were the thrones of Justice, and publick conventions of State, Psal. 122. 5. There were the Masters of the Assemblies, or a Colledge and Senate of the most learned men of the Nation, Eccles. 12. 11. 2 Reg. 21. 14. so that there he met with all the furtherances which a learned and wise man could desire in the prosecution of such a design.

And I gave my heart] I did cheerfully and purposely set my self about it, and made it my business and delight, 2 Chron. 11. 16. 1 Chro. 22. 19. 2 Cor. 8. 5.

to seek and search out] Searching is more then seeking, and denotes an orderly and accurate exploration, such as merchants use, who with great diligence procure rarest commodities out of several Countries, Eccl. 7. 25. Ezek. 20. 6.

by wisdome] An excellent instrument in such an inquiry.

all things done under the Sun] All natural causes and effects, all humane counsels and events: this phrase is much used by Solomon in this Book, whereby is limited the subject matter about which he inquires.

this

this ſore travel] Or, *afflicting labour*; as Chap. 2. 23. and 4. 8.

hath given to the ſons of man] It is his ordinance, he hath called them to ſearch his works and wayes.

to be exerciſed] Or afflicted and diſtracted therein, therefore not at all to be made bleſſed thereby.

From hence we may obſerve: First, That the beſt way of teaching is out of our own experience, and exact diſquiſition, Pſal. 66. 16, 17. Gal. 1. 16.

2. That ſound repentance doth notably fit a man to know and ſearch out the Will of God, and to diſcover and teach the vanity of all other things, 2 Tim. 2. 25. Jam. 1. 21. Luke 22. 32. Pſal. 51. 12, 13.

3. That men in higheſt authority are by their ſtudies as well as their power to ſeek the welfare of thoſe over whom they are ſet, and to endeavour with all their hearts to fit themſelves with wiſdome and abilities for diſcharge of their office, 1 Reg. 3. 7, 8, 9. Luke 2. 52. Act. 6. 4. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 14, 15.

4. That the piety, age, dignity, authority, experience of a perſon, though it add nothing to the truth it ſelf, yet hath a great power to perſwade and prepare the hearts of hearers to the entertainment of it, Philem. verſ. 9. 2 Cor. 10. 7, & & 11. 5, 6, 22 23.

&

& 12. 1,2,3,4,5. 11. 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. & 15. 8, 9, 10.

5. That largeneſs of Gifts and Helps from God, ſhould quicken us unto a more cheerfull and vigorous ſtudy of our duties, Matth. 15. 16, 17.

6. That largeneſs of heart in knowledge of things natural, moral, Humane, Divine, are Royal Endowments, and things fit for a King to ſet his heart upon, Prov. 31. 4. The greater our place, power, wealth is, the more noble and ſerious ſhould our thoughts and imployments be.

7. The more men abound with worldly things, the looſer ſhould they keep their hearts from them, and the more ſhould they ſtudy the vanity of them, leſt otherwiſe they ſteal away their hearts from God, Pſal. 62. 10.

8. The dignity, wiſdome, piety of a people being duly conſidered, doth whet and add vigour to the ſtudies and cares of thoſe who are ſet over them for their good, 2 Reg. 3. 8, 5. Mar. 6. 5, 6.

9. We ſhould improve the benefit of places and perſons amongſt whom we converſe, to fit our ſelves thereby for the ſervice of the Church. It is not only a comfort, but a furtherance unto wiſe and learned men, to live in places where wiſdom and learning is profeſſed, Act. 1. 4.

10. It

10. It is a great comfort when men have helps and encouragements anſwerable to their imployments, and having ſuch, when they have hearts to uſe them, Prov, 17.16.

11. Here are the right principles of ſucceſsfull diligence in our places; 1. A willing heart, when a man goes about his work with all his ſtrength, Eccleſ. 9. 10. 2. Attendance on the Call of God, and for that reaſon ſubmitting unto travel and pains, Act. 26. 19. Gal. 1. 15. 3. Stirring up the gifts which God hath given us as furtherances unto duty, 2. Tim. 1. 6. 4. Exquiſite inſpection into the buſineſſes about which we are imployed, that we may not through our own negligence come behind in any gift, 1 Cor. 13. 31. & 14. 12.

12. It is the will of God, that even our honourable and our neceſſary imployments ſhould be accompanied with ſore travel, that we may be kept humble in our ſelves, weaned from the creature, and made the more thankfull for any aſſiſtance the Lord giveth us in our Labours, and for any bleſſing upon them, Job. 5. 7. Gen. 3. 19.

13. The ſtudy of the Creatures is of excellent uſe to lead us to the knowledge of the Creator, Rom. 1. 19. Pſ. 111. 2.

V. 14. *I have ſeen all the works that are done under the Sun, and behold all is vanity*

and

and vexation of ſpirit.] The former words ſhewed the exactneſs of Solomons ſearch into natural and humane things. That it was the labour of an aged Convert, (for Solomon was drawn away from God in his old age, 1 Reg. 11.4.) of a wiſe King, furniſhed with all Helps for ſuch an inquiry: That it was an accurate and deep ſearch, not looſe or ſuperficial. That it was undertaken with great impulſion of heart, and with a ſpecial Call of God: and now after all this, he concludes,

1. That he had *ſeen*] That is, diligently heeded, and fully underſtood, as to the iſſue of this inquiry, *all the works done under the Sun*, Exod. 3.3. Eccleſ. 2.13,14.

all the things] That is, the ſeveral kinds of them, 1 Reg. 4. 33. He had gotten as large and as intuitive a knowledge as humane curioſity or induſtry, with all manner of furtherances could attain unto. Which appears not to be an arrogant boaſt, but a true account of the fruit of his ſtudies, the Holy Ghoſt teſtifying the ſame thing of him, 1 Reg. 4. 29—34. & 10.23.

2. That he found all to be *vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*] Not only vain and ineffectual to confer Happineſs, but which is worſe, apt to bring much affliction and trouble upon the heart of him who is too earneſtly conver-

converſant about them. From ſeveral original Roots, there are by Interpreters given ſeveral explications of this word, Evil, or Affliction of Spirit. Breach, contrition, torment of Spirit; feeding upon, or conſuming of the ſpirit; or vanity and feeding upon wind, as fruitleſs labour is expreſſed, Hoſ. 12. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 26. Thus he applyes his general concluſion particularly unto all kind of knowledge, Natural and Moral. There is ſore travel in the getting, danger of forgeting it again, diſcovery thereby of more Ignorance then a man obſerved in himſelf before; inſufficiency and impoſſibility of perfecting the underſtanding, and ſatiating the deſires thereof. Such and many other Conſiderations make Knowledge it ſelf, as to the procuring of true Happineſs, altogether Vain.

V. 15. *That which is crooked cannot be made ſtrait*] This is the Reaſon of the vanity of Knowledge, becauſe it cannot rectifie any thing in us which is amiſs, nor ſupply any thing which we want to make us happy, Eccleſ. 7. 13. The wiſeſt and wealthieſt King with all his power and knowledge was not able to remedy all the evils which he ſaw, or to ſupply all the defects which he could diſcover.

The words may be underſtood two wayes; 1. In relation to Knowledge it ſelf, to ſhew the

the vanity and vexation thereof: For, 1. Much of it is exceeding tortuous, intricate, and abſtruſe, there are many knots and difficulties, Dan. 5. 12. So it cannot be clearly and plainly demonſtrated, but in the inquiries therein to the mind will be left dark and unſatisfied; there are ἀσύμβολα, not only in the Scripture, 2 Pet. 3. 16. but in the book of nature too, Job. 28.20,21. & 37. 14,15, 16. & 38.16-23. 2. the defects of this kind are innumerable, the things which a man knoweth not, are infinitely more then thoſe which he knoweth, Job 11. 6.——9.

2. In relation unto the efficacy of knowledge. The heart and life of man is naturally crooked and perverſe, very tortuous, wicked, and deceitfull, Jer. 17. 9. Pſal. 125. 5. and it is exceeding defective both in principles, and in power to do good as it ought, Rom. 3. 23. 2. Cor. 3. 5. Now all the moſt exquiſite natural knowledge is not able to rectifie theſe things, either to reſtore man to his original integrity, or ſupply his manifold defects. Such knowledge will puff up, 1. Cor. 8. 1. but it will not ſanctifie, Rom. 1. 20, 21, 32. Jude. verſ. 20. The Lord indeed by his grace and ſpirit doth both, Luk. 3. 5. Pſal. 84. 11. 1 Theſſ. 3. 10. Eph. 3. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 5. but no natural or acquired knowledge is able to do it.

3. As

3. As it cannot rectifie that which is amiſs in man, ſo neither in any other thing. Sin hath brought much diſorder, corruption, confuſion upon the whole Creation, Rom. 8. 20. infinite are the defects and failings every where. And none of this can all the wiſdom of man be able to correct, but he muſt ſtill leave it as he found it, vain and imperfect. So it will be till the time of the reſtitution of all things, when God will make a new earth and a new heaven, and deliver the Creature from the bondage of corruption, into a glorious liberty, Act. 1. 21. 2 Pet. 3. 13. And all this he affirms of the moſt excellent natural knowledge; how much more vain and unprofitable are the perverſe and impertinent ſtudies of many men, which have nothing of ſolidity or uſefullneſs in them, Col. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5. Rom. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 1, 20.

V. 16, 17. *I communed with mine own*, &c.] This is a Prolepſis wherein he meeteth with an objection, *viz.* That the knowledge of the creatures might make a man happy, though he had not attained unto it, not for any defect in them, but in the narrowneſs of his own underſtanding. To which he anſwereth, That if any man could have found it out in them, he ſhould, in regard of the greatneſs of his parts, and exquiſite induſtry; as Chap. 2. 12.

I com-

I communned with my heart] I caſt up my accounts, and exactly viewed the fruit and ſum of all my labours in getting knowledge. I did ſeriouſly deliberate, and take a view of mine own heart, Pſal. 4. 5. True wiſdome makes a man thoughtfull and diſcurſive within himſelf.

I am come to great eſtate, and have gotten, or added, *more wiſdome*] Or, I have gotten great eſtate and wiſdome, and added to it, I have exceeded and increaſed in wiſdome. So the word ſeems elſewhere to import, 1 Sam. 20. 41. Eſay 9. 3. Amos 8. 5. Or, I have come to be a great man, Joel 2. 20. to do great things. ἐμεγαλυνθην.

then all they that have been before me] 1 King. 4. 30. & 10. 27. yea all that come after him too, Chriſt only excepted, 1 King. 3. 12.

in Jeruſalem] Where the ſtudy of wiſdom was, more then in other places.

my heart had great experience. Had ſeen much wiſdome and knowledge] Wiſdome ſeems to note the general knowledge of things Divine and humane; Knowledge, the experimental: or wiſdom the Habit and inſtrument; knowledge, the acquired perfection gotten by the help of that habitual wiſdome. Here, 1. He ſeems to have magnified

fied wiſdom in his choice, which alſo may be implyed in the word הגדלתי 1 Reg. 3. 9. 11. 2. To have increaſed it. 3. To have carried it into his heart, it was inward and experimental knowledge. 4. To have delighted in it, & gone ſeriouſly & with full pupoſe about it.

gave my heart] See verſ. 13. The more wiſe any man is, the more he laboureth to grow in wiſdom.

to know wiſdom, and to know madneſs and folly] Chap. 7. 25. Hereby he underſtands moral, political, and practical knowledge, in order to its better government, to obſerve the difference between wiſe and vertuous, and between fooliſh and wicked actions: the word rendred *folly*, is in this onely place written with the letter ש *Sin*, in all others with the letter ס *Samech*, and ſo may be here rendred either *folly*, or *prudence*. And this he found to be *vexation of ſpirit*, or feeding on wind; obſerving how ſhort men came of the one, and how much the other did abound. Or finding by his own experience, that neither the perfection of moral wiſdome, ſo far as it is acquirable by humane diligence, nor yet the pleaſures and delights of vitious and fooliſh could quiet and ſettle the heart of man, 1 Cor. 1. 20. Eccleſ. 11. 8, 9. A bare ſpeculative knowledge of good, and an experimental

pre-

presumptuous knowledge of evil, such as Adams was in eating the forbidden fruit, are so far from making men happy, that they increase their misery.

But here Solomon may seem to have committed an errour against the moral wisdome which he here professed to enquire after, namely, in speaking of much so his own eminency in gifts beyond other men, Joh. 8. 13. He doth it not falsly, arrogantly, nor proudly and vain-gloriously, to magnifie himself, but humbly, in acknowledging Gods gifts, and necessarily to discover thereby the truth of that doctrine he was now teaching the Church by his own experience: and so it is lawful to make mention of Gods gifts and graces bestowed on us, as the Apostle doth, 1 Cor. 14.18. & 15.10. 2 Cor. 11, 5, 6.

V. 18. *in much wisdome*] Or, *in the abundance of wisdome*, as Psal. 72. 7. & 51. 1. Prov. 20.6, 15. Hos. 8. 12. Or in the man who is much in wisdome, or who hath much wisdome, Job 11.2. The sense is every way the same.

is much grief] Or, *anger*, or *indignation*. Whence the Chaldee Paraphrase, The more knowledge any man hath, without repentance, the more wrath is upon him from the Lord, as Luke 12.47. But the meaning, according

cording to the ſcope of the context, is, That abundance of wiſdome is alwaies accompanied with a proportion of trouble and perturbation of mind; as indignation, to ſee how little fruit, and how much diſappointment a man doth meet with in it, and how little accompt is made of it in the World, as Eccleſ. 9. Grief and diſcontent, when the more wiſdom a man hath, the more ignorance he doth diſcover in himſelf, and the more pains he muſt take to go on unto more knowledge yet unattained; and yet ſtill find his crookedneſs of mind, and manifold defects uncorrected, unſupplyed; fear of loſing, and forgetting what with ſo great pains had been gotten. Some begin the next Chapter with theſe words, and ſo make them a tranſition to the next endeavour of Solomon, to finde out happineſs in ſome other thing; and ſo the ſenſe runs thus; Forasmuch as in much wiſdome there is much grief, &c. and this was not the way to attain true happineſſe and content to toyl and weary out my ſelf with pain, ſorrow of mind and body in the attaining of wiſdome: *Therefore I ſaid in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth,* &c. Yet the purpoſe of the Wiſe man is not to deter men from ſo noble a labour as the ſtudy of wiſdome and learning, but to raiſe up to the ſtudy of heavenly Wiſdome, and

the fear of God, whereby their other knowledge would be ſanctified, ſweetned, and made excellently uſeful and comfortable to them.

CHAP. II.

BEing diſappointed in his expectation from the knowledge of the Creature, he now reſolveth to ſearch what good may be found in the uſe and fruition of it, and ſo ſets himſelf to try what content either ſenſual, or rational pleaſures could bring to the heart; which he doth, from verſ. 1. to ver. 12. and finding that he had changed for the worſe, he goes back again to the conſideration of wiſdome and madneſſe, and finding as much diſappointment the ſecond time, as he had done the firſt, verſ. 12——23. He concludeth, that there is no comfort nor tranquility to be found in the uſe of Creatures, till by the favour of God it be ſweetned unto us, Verſ. 24, 25, 26.

Verſ. 1. I *Said in my heart*] I purpoſed Within my ſelf, and did reſolve with intimate affection to try what pleaſures would do, Chap. 1. 16. Luke 12. 19.

Go to now] It is an adverbial form of exhorting

horting and quickening his heart unto ſuch a courſe.

I will prove thee with mirth] Or, by mirth, as by the inſtrument of enquiring after happineſſe, Judg. 6. 39. 1 King. 10. 1. I will make tryal another way whether pleaſures will content thee, Pſal. 26. 2. the word being deriveable from another root, admits of another ſenſe, but to the ſame purpoſe, I will pour out my ſelf in delights, or I will abound in delights. Pleaſures do melt and pour out the ſoul; hence Reuben is ſaid to be unſtable as waters, Gen. 49. 4. Ezek. 16. 15. Luſts have a greedineſs and exceſs in them, Eph. 4. 19. I will wholly give my ſelf, my heart ſhall flow forth into delights, I will fully gratifie my ſenſes, and indulge my fancy in all pleaſing things.

therefore enjoy pleaſure] Or, *ſee good.* To ſee, is to enjoy, Iſa. 53. 11. Pſal. 34. 8. & 4. 6. Live plentifully, indulge to thy ſelf all delights, reſtrain not thy ſelf from any deſire of thine eyes.

V. 2. *I ſaid of laughter*] By *laughter*, he meaneth any exceſs of joy, and merriment, when the heart is ſo full, that it cannot contain its delight within, but it breaketh forth into the face, voice, and outward behaviour, Gen. 21. 6. Pſal. 126. 2. Luke 6. 21.

or I ſaid to laughter, Thou art mad] By a Proſopopœia. Exceſs of joy tranſporteth the mind, and as it were diſplaceth reaſon, argues much levity, vanity, incompoſedneſs of judgment. True joy is a ſevere and ſerious thing, keeps the heart alwayes in a ſtayed and fixed condition, but the joy which breaks forth into laughter, is like the crackling of thorns, Eccl. 7.6. and hath a ſorrow at the bottom of it: as a mad-man, the more merry he is, is the more miſerable, Prov. 14. 13. Jam. 4.9.

and of mirth, what doth it?] What good or profit bringeth it with it? Job 35. 6, 7. Matth. 20.32. The interrogation bids a challenge to all the maſters of mirth, that were to produce any one ſatisfactory fruit which it affordeth. Thus we ſee by the example of Solomon, that the heart cannot ſtay long on any one enquiry wherein it meeteth with diſ-ſatisfaction, but it quickly haſteneth unto another, as a Bee flyeth from flower to flower, when there is not enough in one to ſatiate it, as a ſick man that removes from one bed, couch, chamber, unto another for eaſe, and finds none, Eſay 57.10. Jer. 2.23, 36. 2. That in ſuch kind of changes uſually the heart goeth from better to worſe, as here Solomon from wiſdome to pleaſure. 3. Here is obſervable the nature of ſenſu-

mirth

mirth, it tends towards exceſs, and ſo towards undecency and madneſs: for here is not condemned moderate, but exceſſive pleaſure, when a man gives up his heart to it, and makes it the buſineſs of his life.

V. 3. *I ſought in my heart*] Upon ſerious deliberation, and further exploration of that good which men may in this life attain unto, finding that neither wiſdome alone, nor pleaſures alone, could bring me unto it, I purpoſed to temper them together; and ſince I found that wiſdome and knowledge was accompanied with grief and ſorrow, I intended to mitigate thoſe griefs with bodily delights: and yet ſo, as that my wiſdom might reſtrain thoſe delights from any exceſs, and from diſabling me in the duties which I owed to God or men.

to give my ſelf unto wine] To draw my fleſh with wine. Or, to draw forth my fleſh unto wine. Abſtinence doth ſhrink and contract the body, and keep it under, 1. Cor. 9.27. Dan. 1. 10. feaſting and mirth doth draw it forth, Pſal. 73.7. That leanneſſe or waſting of body which by hard ſtudies I had contracted, I now purpoſed by more delicacy of living, and indulgence to draw forth into freſhneſs, fulneſs and beauty again. Or, to draw with wine, to ſpend more time in feaſting, banqueting, and delights then for-

merly I had done. So drawing signifies sometimes continuance and prolongation of a business, Psal. 85.5. Isai. 13.22. Ezek. 12.28. So the glutton, Luk. 16.19.

unto wine] (*i.e.*) By a Synecdoche, unto all kind of delicates in eating and drinking, in banqueting and feasting. As bread signifies all necessaries, Amos 7.12. with 6. 11. so wine all delicates, Prov. 9.2. Cant. 8. 2. & 2. 4.

yet acquainting mine heart with wisdome] Or, leading my heart by wisdom, resolving to keep such a temper, as to carry my self not licentiously, but wisely in the use of pleasures, to keep my self from being captivated unto, or swallowed up of these carnal delights, as using them not sensually, with a bruitish excesse, but critically and rationally to finde out what real content they do afford unto the heart of an intelligent man. I did so give my flesh unto wine, as though I kept my heart for wisdom still.

and to lay hold on folly] By folly, he meaneth those pleasures, the laying hold on which he found in the event to be nothing but folly. Thus to lay hold on them is fully to possess a mans self with them, and to embrace and apprehend them with all one strength, Isa. 56.4. 1 Tim. 6.19. Phil. 3.12, 13. It may likewise seem to intimate thus much,

much, That he held folly from mixing with his pleasures, or coming into his heart along with them, to hold it as a man holds an enemy from doing him any hurt, Judg. 12.6. & 16. 21.

till I might see what was that good for the sons of men] This was the end of his enquiring; it was not to drown himself in sensuality, but to discover what kind of course was that, which would render this present mortal life more comfortable to a man. He did it not vitiously, but to make an experiment only. Solomon found in himself emptiness and indigency, he felt strong opposition after some good which might supply those wants; and he had active principles of reason to enquire what that good was, which Nature did so much want, and so greatly desire. And this reason and habitual wisdome he imployed to the uttermost, to discover that good under heaven which might most perfectly satisfie the wants and desires of the reasonable soul.

under heaven] As before under the Sun. He was not ignorant, but that in the Heavens there was a supreme and infinite good, which the glorified soul should enjoy unto endlesse satisfaction; but he speaketh here of that good under the Sun, which may most sweeten the mortal life of man.

all the dayes of their life] That is, time good which is durable, and commensurate to the Soul that feeds on it. Now most of the things he here recounteth are onely for some seasons of life; as painful studies, vigorous pleasures, active negotiations, when age and and infirmities come, they forsake him; and so these good things dye before the man that should enjoy them, 2 Sam. 19. 35. Psal. 90. 10. Eccl. 12. 3, 4, 5. Therefore in this enquiry, the duration of the good, is as requisite to be considered as the quality of it; whether it will continue with a man as a stay and comfort to him all the dayes of his life. Nothing will do this but godliness, Psal. 92. 13, 14. There can be no time, no condition in a mans life, wherein the fear of God will not be comfortable unto him.

Here we observe; 1. That in all these inquiries Solomon begins with his heart, thereby noting unto us, That the good which must satisfie a man, must bear proportion to his heart, and to his inward man. 2. That he tempers his pleasures and [illegible] pains in seeking knowledge, together; teaching thereby, that the right use of pleasures, is not to take up the whole man, but to mitigate the bitterness and pains of severer studies thereby. 3. That a man hath never greater need of the bridle of wisdom, then when he is in

pursuance

purſuance of carnall delights. 4. That pleaſures and folly are very near of kin; and a very hard thing it is to hold folly ſo faſt in, but that it will get looſe, and immixe it ſelf in carnal delights. 5. That a free and full indulgence unto pleaſures, though not upon ſenſual, but critical and more curious aims, will by degrees ſteal away the heart, & much abate more ſpiritual and heavenly delights: corruption ever creeping in with curioſity, Prov. 20. 1. & 23. 3, 6. It is a noble and high frame of ſpirit, to look out in every thing which a man undertakes, after that which is truly and principally good for his heart, in the uſe of that thing. 7. That the comfort of a mans life under heaven, is to be doing of that good which God hath given him his ſtrength and life for. 8. That nothing is truely the good of a mans life, which is not commenſurate in duration and continuance thereunto, and which will not properly miniſter comfort unto him into whatſoever various conditions of life, as ſickneſs, poverty, bondage, diſfavour, old age, &c. he may be caſt into.

V. 4. Having upon further deliberation, declared his purpoſe, to ſearch for good amongſt pleaſures and bodily delights; he now ſheweth what magnificent and royal proviſions he made, in order to that deſign, ſumptuous diet, ſtately buildings, vineyards, gardens, or-

chards, foreſts, parks, fiſh-ponds, honourable retinue of ſervants; poſſeſſions of all ſorts of cattel; treaſures of gold, ſilver, and all precious things; muſick vocal, inſtrumental; and all theſe in great abundance, as far as royal wealth could procure, largeneſſe of heart deſire, or exquiſite wiſdom contrive: In all which he took exceeding much joy and delight, being withheld by no manner of impediments from the full fruition of them; yet in the concluſion, he paſſeth the ſame cenſure here, as he had done before, That all was vanity, &c.

I made me great works] I did not ſtoop to baſe and inconſiderable things, to find out that pleaſure which might ſatisfie my deſires, but I ſought it in magnificent works, becomming the royal ſtate of a King; as Eſth. 1.4. Of which works, he doth immediately ſubjoyn a large catalogue.

I builded me; Or to my ſelf, or for my ſelf (it is Datrius's Commody) *houſes*, large and ſtately, thirteen years in building, 1 Reg. 7.1——13. & 9.15,17,18,19. Houſes for habitation, and houſes for ſtate and pleaſure; winter-houſes, and ſummer-houſes, Amos 3. 15. David had built an houſe of Cedar before, 2 Chron. 2.3. but Solomon contenteth not himſelf with that,

vine-

vineyards] Cant. 8. 11. David likewiſe had vineyards, and orchards, and cattel, and treaſures, and ſervants ſet over all theſe, 1 Chron. 7. 25——31. yet Solomon will have them in greater magnificence, having no wars nor troubles to interrupt him, as his father had.

V. 5. *I made me gardens and orchards*] Gardens for flowers, plants, ſpices, Cant. 6. 2. orchards, or paradiſes for trees of all ſorts; under which we may comprize forreſts and parks, or places for choiſeſt cattel, Cant. 4. 13, 14. Neh. 2. 8. which were places of great pleaſure and delight, Eſth. 1. 8.

V. 6. *pools of water, to water therewith the wood*, &c.] Artificial ponds, and receptacles of water, whether ariſing from ſprings, or otherwiſe by aqueducts, and other means derived thither, 2 Reg. 18. 17. Theſe uſed to be in, or near great gardens, and near princely works, 2 Reg. 20. 20. Neh. 2. 14. & 3. 15. Gen. 2. 9, 10. Cant. 7. 4. To water the wood or forreſt, whereby he ſeemeth to mean the gardens and orchards, before mentioned, for the ſpacionſneſs of them. So a forreſt is elſewhere called an orchard or paradiſe, Neh. 2. 8. Theſe things in theſe hot Countries, were accounted ſpecial bleſſings, and from thence they have their name, Joſh. 15. 19. Theſe things he had as materials for his wiſdome, 1 Reg. 4. 33.

V. 7.

V. 7. *I got me ſervants and maidens*] Some he bought or hired from abroad, others were born unto him in his houſe: and theſe he had for the manifold duties of his royal family: Such had David, 1 Chron. 27. 26——31. and ſo Solomon, 1 Reg. 4. 7. & 5. 16, 17. & 10. 5.

And had ſervants born in mine houſe] Sons of mine houſe; the children of an handmaid born in her maſters houſe, were born ſervants unto the maſter of the houſe, Gen. 14. 14. & 15. 3. & 17. 12. Jer. 2. 14. hereunto David alludeth, when he ſaith, I am thy ſervant, the ſon of thy handmaid, Pſal. 116. 16. The ſervants of Solomon, which were certain publick officers, appointed by Solomon, we read of long after, Ezra 2. 58. Neh. 7. 60. who may ſeem to be thoſe of the *Canaanites*, whom Solomon made bond-ſlaves, 1 Reg. 9. 21. Some, by ſons of the houſe, underſtand thoſe officers whom Solomon did ſet over his houſe, to order the Affairs thereof, 1 Reg. 4. 27.

poſſeſſions of great and ſmall cattel] Or, I had cattel both great and ſmall, or herds and flocks. The firſt word is general to all cattel, great or ſmall; the two next, the ſpecies of that general, Gen. 34. 23. 1 Reg. 4. 22, 23, 26.

above all that were before me in Jeruſalem] As

As more wiſdom, Chap.1.16. ſo more wealth, and proviſions for that wiſdom to work upon, 1 Reg.3.13. & 10.23.

V.8. *I gathered me alſo ſilver and gold*] I heaped it up; as Pſal.33.7. 1 Reg.9.28. & 10.14.& 15.27. The wayes of this great gain were Tribute, 1 Reg.10.25. Honourers preſents, ſent out of the high admiration of his wiſdom, from other Princes, 1 Reg. 10. 10. & 4.34. and merchandize, or free-trade into remote Countries, 1 Reg.9.26---28. & 10.15,28.

and the peculiar treaſure of Kings and of Provinces] Precious rarities, or moſt choice & deſirable things, which men uſe to lay up in their treaſures; the chief rarities of ſeveral Countries, 1 Chron.29.3. Hence whatſoever is intimately dear and honourable, is metaphorically called *ſegullah*, Exod.19.5. Pſal.135.4. Mal.3.17. The Apoſtle rendreth it περιουσιον, Tit.2.14. others, ἐκλεκτὸν, that which is of principal worth and eſteem, Iſai. 39.2. The precioueſt and moſt deſirable things, which Kingdoms and Provinces could afford, or wherewith Princes and Provinces did uſe to preſent him, 1 Reg.4.21. & 9.11. & 10.2,10. 2 Chron.9.9. & 10.24.

I got me men ſingers and women ſingers] Theſe as well as thoſe, becauſe naturally their voices are ſweeter then mens: So we finde them

them joyned, 2 Sam. 19. 35. 2 Chron. 35. 25. So we read, that not onely Moſes and the men, but Miriam and the women did ſing at the overthrow of Pharaoh, Exod. 15. 1. & 20. 21. 1 Sam. 8. 6, 7.

and the delights of the ſons of men, viz. *muſical inſtruments*, &c.] The word tranſlated *muſical inſtruments*, is no where elſe uſed in the Scripture, and hath various interpretations put upon it. Some underſtanding by it, beautiful daughters, denominated from their breſts, as elſewhere from their womb, Judg. 5. 30. Others, for choice and delicate women, taken as a prey in war, as we finde there the manner was: and others for divers other things, as we find in Hierom, Druſius, Mercer, and others. But the moſt received ſenſe, and moſt agreeable with the former delight of ſingers, is muſical inſtruments.

V. 9. *So I was great, and increaſed*] Or, added to my greatneſs; as Chap. 1. 16. 1 Reg. 10. 23.

alſo my wiſdome remained with me] This he addeth, 1. as a rare and unuſual thing, that pleaſures ſhould not at all ſmother and ſuppreſs wiſdom; 2. As an Argument towards the main concluſion, that in the midſt of all theſe delights, he did intend the buſineſs for the which he uſed them, namely,

by

by wiſdome to obſerve, what real good and ſatisfaction they did bring to the heart of man.

V. 10. *And whatſoever mine eyes deſired*, &c.] It might be objected, That his wiſdom haply and his fear of God, reſtrained both his eye and his heart from ſo full a fruition of theſe delights, as were requiſite to extract all the comfort of them; ſo Job reſtrained his eye, Job 31. 1. and Solomon adviſeth a glutton to reſtrain his appetite, Prov. 23. 2. Numb. 15. 39. To this he anſwereth, That whatſoever his eyes deſired, (as the eye is one of the principal ſeats of deſire or luſting, 1 Joh. 2. 16. Joſh. 7. 21.) he did not reſerve any thing of it from them, which withheld his heart from any joy: Neither did any accidental hinderance intercede, as war, or ſickneſs, or ſorrow, or any notable affliction, which might debar him from a liberal and cheerful uſe of all this his greatneſſe. The eye is here taken ſynecdochically for all the ſenſes, (for in this ample preparation there was proviſion for them all.) Much labour and care he had taken to make thoſe proviſions for the fleſh; (as the Apoſtles phraſe in another ſenſe is, Rom. 13. 14.) and there was no other fruit of all that labour, but having gotten them, to enjoy them.

my heart rejoyced] That is, I my ſelf did intimately rejoyce and pleaſe my ſelf in the fruit of my labours.

this was my portion of all my labour] This was all the fruit, benefit, and as it were, inheritance, which my labours in this kind did purchaſe for me. A metaphor from the manner of dividing inheritances, Numb. 18.20. or ſpoils, 1 Sam. 30.24.

V. 11. *Then I looked on all*, &c.] After all this, I turned and looked back, or took an impartial ſurvey of all my works, which with ſuch painful labours and trouble I had wrought: and found, that the fruit was not anſwerable to the toyl which was ſuſtained for the reaping of it: but that this alſo was vanity, a periſhing, withering, and dying comfort, a feeding upon wind, and that it left no abiding benefit behind it, Ch. 1.3.

V. 12. *And I turned my ſelf*, &c.] Here Solomon doth once more ſeriouſly apply himſelf, as he did before, Chap. 1.17. to take a view of wiſdom and folly. Becauſe it might haply be objected, That at the firſt conſideration of them, he might let many things ſlip, which were of weight and moment in his preſent inquiry. Becauſe, ſecond thoughts, and ſolemn review of former ſtudies, may haply beget ſome retractation, and diſcover

ſome

some error: The later day being usually the disciple of the former; and we use to say, that the second thoughts are the wisest: therefore when the Scripture will put a thing beyond question, it sayes it over again, Gal. 8. 9.

I turned my self] This notes reconsideration and special heedfulness, to inquire a new into a business, and likewise a weariness of those pleasures which had disappointed him, Joh. 20. 14.

to behold wisdom, and madness and folly] To compare the one with the other, that I might the better understand them, as contraries serve to set forth one the other. There is nothing more usual in Solomons Proverbs then this kind of Antithesis, to put contraries together for natural illustration.

for what can the man do that cometh after the King] Here man and king; the king seems to be opposed, what further progress can any more private man make in this disquisition, then I who am such a king? This is a Prolepsis or answer to a tacite objection; for it might be said, that it was a high and bold attempt for one man out of his particular experience to passe so confident a sentence of vanity, & vexation, upon all wisdom and greater works. To this he answereth, that no man after him, could do more in this

enquiry

enquiry then he had done, who was so eminent in wisdom, in power, and in industry, that was as it were fitted and stirred up by God unto this business; and therefore if any man after him should set about the same work, he should do no other thing then that which the king had done before him. This appears to be no arrogant boast in Solomon; because the Scripture testifieth the same of him, 1 Reg. 3. 12. The Man who will not believe it upon my report, but will make trial of it himself, if he will go with the same wisdom and integrity about it as I have done, shall find the same vanity in the bottom of every creature, as I have found. So here are two reasons why Solomon challengeth belief in this point. 1. The advantages which he so great a king had above any other man, to draw forth all the flower and quintessence of the creature. 2. The double diligence which he used in it, in not onely viewing throughly once, but reviewing again the things upon which he passed such a judgment.

what the man] The words intimate a kinde of indignation, disdain, undervaluing of any one who should attempt such an inquiry after him, as Psal. 8. 4. *Quid dignum tanto tulit hic promissor hiatu*; what is the man who cometh after the king, whom they have made

made king before; ſo ſome read the words: but the moſt genuine and coherent ſence is that which our tranſlation expreſſeth; he that comes after can do nothing but what they have done: *i.e.* what is done already before them. The active voice indefinite uſed for the paſſive, as Iſa. 9. 6. Jer. 12. 6. Gen. 16. 14. 1 Sam. 23. 22.

I would obſerve hence, 1. That the double and multiplyed experience of wiſe, great and good men, doth gain much credit and ſtrength to the doctrines ſo confirmed, 1 Joh. 1. 3. Heb. Chap. 11. & 12. 1. Jam. 5. 10, 11.

2. That the more prejudice is in the heart of men against a truth, the more care muſt be uſed to vindicate the ſame from all ſhew of exception, Tit. 1. 11. & 2. 8. Act. 6. 10. and 18. 28.

3. For a man to ſpeak the truth of himſelf touching the gifts of God beſtowed on him, and to mention his own experiences, onely ayming therein at the glory and truth of God, and edification of the Church, is no arrogance, or violation of modeſty, but an improving of Gods gifts to the ends for which he give them, Chap. 1. 16.

V. 13. *Then I ſaw that wiſdom excelleth folly:* &c.] That there is an excellency in wiſdom

wiſdom more then in folly, &c. This Solomon confeſſeth, that indeed there is a great difference between wiſdom and pleaſures, that being many waies more excellent then thoſe; and therefore though the ſtudy of wiſdom be not without pain and ſorrow, Chap. 1. 18. yet it is not therefore to be rejected: Wiſdom leaves behind it ſome permanent good, as the word here imports, whereas pleaſures do periſh in their uſe, and nothing ſtaies behinde them but the ſting and ſorrow. The ſorrow of wiſdom is in the getting, but the ſorrow of pleaſures is after the uſing, and enjoying of them. It is true, wiſdom and knowledg are vain, in order to a higher and nobler end then they bear propotion unto. *viz.* to make man truly happy, yet they are of excellent uſe, and ſingular ornaments to the ſoul which hath them; ſo the Apoſtle, though he tell us that charity is more excellent then gifts, the one ſerving for edification onely of others, but the other for ſanctification of a mans ſelf, yet acknowledgeth that they are all operations of Gods Spirit, and beſtowed on men for very profitable uſes, and accordingly to be earneſtly deſired, 1 Cor, 12.4,7,31.& 14. 1,39. we are ſo to eſteem gifts, as that we prefer ſalvation and happineſſe before them, Luk. 10. 20.

As

As far as light excelleth darkneſſe] Wiſdom to the minde being as light to the body and therefore the Rabins called their wiſe men, the light of the world; as our Saviour his Apoſtles. Matth. 5. 14. Light is many waies comfortable, it ſhews things in their diſtinct forms and ſhews, it diſcovers any thing hurtfull, that it may be avoided; or beneficial, that it may be embraced, whereas darkneſſe confoundeth all things, and expoſeth a man to many dangers. Light is pleaſant in it ſelf, Eccleſ. 11. 7. and it is metaphorically uſed to expreſs the moſt excellent things, as joy, Pſal. 97. 11. Eſter. 8. 16. liberties, and deliverance, Iſa. 9. 1. Glory, 1 Tim. 6. 16. Proſperity. Mic. 7. 9. Life it ſelf. Job 3. 16, 20. and uſually, wiſdom and knowledg, whereunto it is here compared, Dan. 5. 14. And it is very uſefull and neceſſary for direction in our works and labours, Joh. 11. 9, 10. But darkneſs on the other ſide is very uncomfortable; it is uſed to expreſs the moſt calamitous and diſconſolate condition, Job. 30. 26. Eccleſ. 5. 17. Iſa. 8. 22. Amos. 5. 18. 20. Iſa. 50. 10. Eccleſ. 11. 8. very unuſefull, as putting a ſtop to all labour, Exod 10. 23. Joſh. 4. 9. very dangerous, as cauſing a man to ſtumble at every ſtone, to fall into every pit, to wander out of his way, &c. Joſh. 11.

12.

12.& 12.35.and folly and ignorance in the mind, is usually expressed by the name of darkness Eph.4.18.& 5.8.Rom.1.21.In the creation, darkness was the first evil which God removed, and light the first good creature that he made, Gen. 1. 2, 3. light excelleth darkness, as the beautifull and orderly frame of nature doth the first confused chaos.

V.14. *The wise mans eyes are in his head*] The reason of the former comparison, a wise man is in the light, but a fool in darkness. In his head, as in a watch-tower, from whence he seeth his way before him a far of, taketh notice of things to come, as well as things present, is circumspect, and heedfull, judicious, and wary in his undertakings; Therefore they who are called wise men in one place, Deut.16.19.are called men that have their eyes open, in another place, Exod.23. 8. They do in the beginning of a businesse look forward to the end of it, they forecast events, foresee consequences; their eyes try their wayes, as Psal.11.4.so looking straight forward, denoteth pondering and weighing a mans actions, Prov.4.25,26. here it is that Moses said to his father in law, who was a very wise man, thou shalt be to us instead of eyes, to guide and counsel us, Numb.10.

31.

31. where the LXX. render it, πρεσβύτης thou ſhalt be an elder, a counſellor, a guide amongſt us; ſo Job ſaith of himſelf, that he was eyes to the blind, Job. 29. 15. A counſellor, and guide unto them. Thus the excellency of wiſdom is deſcribed by the eye, as being the principal part of the body and moſt beneficial to the whole, 1 Cor. 12. 16, 17, 21. Mat. 9. 22. and what the eye is to the body, that is to the mind, Eph. 1. 18.

But the fool walketh in darkneſſe] Hereby we underſtand what is meant by having the eyes in the head, namely, to have them uſeful for guiding and ordering our waies, ſo as that we may not erre, wander, ſtumble, fall, miſtake, miſcarry in our affairs. The Antitheſis ſhould have run thus, but the fools eyes are in his heels, or he hath no eyes to ſee; but the uſe of Scripture is to put in the place of the antitheſis, that which ſhall in ſenſe amount thereunto, as Prov. 12. 27. the one part of the verſe is parabolical or proverbial, but the Antitheſis is plain and familiar; ſo Prov. 14. 3. & 15. 19. The fool is raſh, heady, inconſiderate, cannot diſcern events, nor foreſee dangers; knowes not which way to chuſe, or to refuſe; his eyes are any where, rather then in his head, Prov. 17. 24. is carried headlong in his buſineſs, eaſily ſnared and taken, Prov. 4. 18, 19. 2 Pet. 1. 19.

1.19. Matth.13.15,16. By *darkneſs* here, we may underſtand blindneſſe, Act. 13. 11. and then walking in darkneſs, is a diſcovery of folly; when a man wants eyes, and yet will be wandring and venturing abroad; when he knowes not whither he goes, nor what dangers are in his way.

Thus far he hath ſhewed the excellency of wiſdome above folly, now he ſheweth wherein, notwithſtanding they do ſo far agree, as that vanity belongs unto them both.

And I perceived] The meaning is, notwithſtanding this excellency of the one above the other, *yet I perceived that one event happeneth to them all*] They are equally ſubject to the ſame unhappy events; the wiſeſt man that is cannot by his own counſel exempt himſelf from the ſame common calamities which other men fall into: As two ways which ſeem to part, the one turning to the right hand, and the other to the left, and yet both at laſt bring to the ſame Town, Chap.9. 2. & 3.19.

V. 15. *Then ſaid I in mine heart*] *i.e.* Therefore, or hereupon I ſaid in mine heart, if it happen to me, even to me, as to the fool, to what end have I taken ſo much paine to be more wiſe and learned then he, being by all my wiſdom not a whit protected from

thoſe evils which he hath by his folly expoſed himſelf unto,

That this alſo is vanity] Some make this to be a judgment on that haſty and angry inference, *why was I then more wiſe?* and ſo the meaning to be; This was my infirmity and vanity, to undervalue wiſdom, and meaſure it by the caſual events which befall it, as Pſal. 73.13——15. & 77.10. But the meaning is, that in this reſpect wiſdome is no more able to make a man happy, or to bring perfect tranquility to the Soul, then folly is: albeit in other reſpects there be a ſingular excellency in it above the other.

Here then obſerve, 1. That the moſt excellent endowments of minde that are, cannot perfectly ſatisfie the heart of man.

2. That yet there is a ſpecial beauty and goodneſſe in ſuch gifts, to draw the light of the heart unto them, as being to the minde, as the eye to the head, the guide and the beauty of it; or as light to the eye, a moſt congenial and ſuitable good unto it.

3. That events and ſucceſſes depend not upon the counſels of men, nor upon the gifts of God beſtowed on them, but his Providence hath the caſting voice, and doth over-rule and order them all as pleaſeth him, Eccleſ. 9.11. Pſal. 127. 1, 2. many times thoſe who have leaſt wiſdom or goodneſſe,

have greateſt ſucceſſe, Job 21.7——13. Pſal. 73.3——12. Jer. 12.1,2. Hab. 1.13. Mal. 3. 15. and many times the wiſeſt and moſt circumſpect men, are moſt fruſtrated in thoſe courſes which were contrived with greateſt skill and cunning, 2 Sam. 17.14. Job 5. 12, 13,14. Iſa. 19.11—14. 1 Cor. 1.20.

4. That notwithſtanding the Providence and Counſel of God hath the pre-eminency in the events of things, yet that hindreth not the excellency of wiſdom above folly, neither are we thereby at all encouraged to finde fault with our ſelves for any labour in the uſe of means, onely we muſt ſo uſe them, as not to deifie them, nor to truſt in them, but wholly to depend upon God for his bleſſing on our counſels, to ſubmit to his wiſe and holy purpoſes, when they are diſappointed; to admire his goodneſs when at any times he turneth our imprudence or improvidence unto good, and maketh the event not anſwerable to our follies, but to his love.

5. That we cannot judge of the wiſdom or folly, the goodneſs or badneſs of men by outward events, becauſe theſe happen alike to all, Chap. 8.14, & 9.11.

V. 16. *There is no remembrance, &c.*] What he obſerved in the general before, he now maketh good in two particulars, *viz.*, oblivion

ſivion, and death, which are both alike common to wiſe men and to fools. Wiſe men may ſeem to ſecure at leaſt their names, though they cannot their bodies from mortality; by ſuch magnificent works as Solomon here wrought, and by ſuch noble contemplations as he was converſant in; but he aſſures us here the contrary, and elſewhere, that Piety onely keepeth the name from rotting with the body, Prov. 10. 7. Pſal. 112. 6. Pſal. 49. 11, 12. Jer. 17. 13. Time will eat out all the monuments of wiſdom; or though they continue, yet the renown of a wiſe man doth him no good at all, he is not after death ſenſible of it, or comforted with it, ſo Chap. 1. 11. new wiſe men that ariſe in after Ages, will darken and eclipſe the honour of thoſe that went before them: and ſo will it be done to them in the Ages that follow. To be ſure, no mere wiſe or great mans honour, ſeparated from Piety, will hold pace with his being; at the laſt day there will ſo much ſhameful matter be diſcovered againſt the wiſeſt of wicked men, as they ſhall therein loſe all their renown, and ſhall appear to be veſſels of diſhonour and ſhame for evermore, 1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 20.

And how dieth the wiſe man? as the fool] The ſecond fate, common to both. This *how*, is a paſſionate interrogation, noting

grief that it is so; wonder that it is no otherwise; and indignation or disdain that things so exceeding different in their worth, should both of them perish alike. Thus there is *Quomodo dolentis*, of grieving, Lam. 1. 1. *admirantis*, of wondring, Acts 2. 7, 8. *Indignantis* or *objurgantis*, of chiding and disdain, Joh. 5. 44. Matth. 23. 33. And because it may be objected, That this Argument may as well disable Piety from making a man happy, as wisdom: Since the same question may be framed of them as well as of these, How dieth the just man? as the unjust; we must remember that Piety followes a man and so abides with him after death, which no other acquired excellencies do either as ornaments or as comforts, Rev. 14. 13. Death doth not cut off their spiritual life and union with Christ, which was that which made them happy here. Wicked men are dead being alive, 1 Tim. 5. 6. and good men live in death, Joh. 11. 25, 26. Mat. 22. 32. therefore the Jews called their burying places *domus viventium*, the houses of the living. Therefore there is no durable Life or Honour but in the fear of the Lord.

V. 17. *Therefore I hated life*, &c.] This is the effect which this great vanity of the most excellent humane endowment wrought

in the heart of Solomon, made him weary of living to ſo little purpoſe, as to dye at laſt like the baſeſt of men. He ſaw no lovelineſs or deſireableneſs in life it ſelf, (though the chiefeſt outward bleſſing) all the courſe hereof being full of evil, grievous, cruciating, diſquieting labour, all which at laſt runs down like the waters of Jordan, into the ſame lake of death, with the other refuſe of men. Many mens poverty, pains, ſickneſs, worldly troubles, have cauſed them to complain of their life; but here is one who had health, peace, honour, abundance of all the contents which the world could afford, not murmuringly, but as it were judiciouſly and critically making the ſame complaints. The greatneſſe of his wiſdom being ſuch, as that all the comforts of life were too narrow to ſatisfie the inquiries of it, he ſaw little valuable or deſireable in it.

Here obſerve, 1. That life it ſelf is too mean a thing to bring full content to the ſoul of man. It muſt be ſomething better then life which muſt do it, Pſal. 63. 3.

2. That in the greateſt confluence of worldly things, the life of a man may be full of grievous labour, and he weary of it, not onely out of anguiſh of ſpirit, but of natural wiſdom obſerving the vanity thereof.

3. That the wisdom of man, without making use of the grace of God, is very apt to undervalue the greatest outward blessing which humane nature is capable of; as Solomon here doth life. There is naturally so much distemper in the heart of man, that except all things answer his own desires and expectations, he will fall out with his very life, and pick quarrels with the choycest blessings that God here affords him. As a little cloud hides the light of the whole Sun from the eye, so amidst a multitude of enjoyments, a little labour or trouble which comes along with them, doth darken the beauty, and remove the content of them all, Gen. 30. 1. Psal. 59. 15. Esth. 5. 13.

4. Concerning this point, of being weary of Life, or hating it as an unlovely and undesireable thing, we may note, 1. That Life is the choycest and principal outward blessing which God here affords us, and that unto the comfort and preservation thereof all other outward blessings are directed, Matth. 6. 25. 2. That though in a way of obedience we are to undervalue it at the command of God, when he calls on us to lay it down, Luke 14. 26. Act. 20. 24. 1 Joh. 3. 16. Joh. 12. 25. and in comparison of a better life we may groan for a deliverance from it, and to be with Christ, Phil. 1. 23. yet

it

it is a great fault out of paſſion, murmuring, outward troubles, nay out of largeneſs of heart, as here Solomon doth, to diſ-eſteem and wax weary of ſo great a bleſſing, Gen. 27. 46. Numb. 14. 2 Job 10. 1.. & 36. 20. Jon. 4. 3, 8.

V. 18. *Yea I hated all my labour*, &c.] All thoſe magnificent and excellent works, which with ſo much labour I had wrought. They were all ſo far from miniſtring unto my heart any ſolid contentment, that I grew wholly out of love with them, had no regard nor reſpect at all unto them. If by hatred here, and in the former verſe, be meant only an abatement of that love and delight which his heart might over-ſenſually take in them, then this was a very commendable fruit of the vanity which he diſcovered in them, according to the counſel of the Apoſtle, upon the ſame ground, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. 1 Joh. 2. 15. *Love not the world*, that ſeems to be, a worldly and ſecular life, or Temporal Being; nor the things of the world, that is, the proviſions and materials which are the fuel of luſt in the world: and ſo hatred ſometimes ſignifies an abatement and moderation of love, Matth. 10. 37. compared with Luke 14. 26. Joh. 12. 25. Gen. 29. 30, 31. But if by Hatred, is meant a deteſtation and ab-

horrency of them, ſo as to leave off all care of duty to be exerciſed in wordly things, according to the travel which God hath appointed for the ſons of men, *Chap. 1. 13. Epheſ. 5. 28. 2 Theſſ. 3. 10——13. and this to do, becauſe we find not that plenary ſatisfaction from them, which they were never ordained to adminiſter, then this was an inordinate hatred, which did not belong unto the works themſelves, (being in themſelves good) but unto the ſinful diſtemper of the heart from whence it proceeded. Such was the ſullen diſtemper of Iſrael in the Wilderneſs, Numb. 11. 6. & 20. 4. Jon. 4. 1.

*Becauſe I ſhould leave it unto, &c.] Here the Wiſe man doth ſubjoyn reaſons of this his wearineſs and diſlike of all his paſt labours: 1. Becauſe he was to leave them; there was a neceſſity of parting with them at the laſt. As the heart of man in this ſtate of corruption is naturally apt to cleave to the world and worldly things, ſo there is a peculiar delight in thoſe works which are the fruit of his own wiſdom and labour; and he finds it more hard to wean and take off his affection from them, then from any other. As the Apoſtle ſaith of a mans own proper luſt, ſo we may of his own labour and work, that it doth more eaſily draw away the heart, Jam. 1. 14. therefore when God puniſheth ſuch men, he uſually doth

doth it in the works of their own hands, in their principal and peculiar imployments; as Tyrus in her merchandize, Ezek. 27. 27: Pharaoh in his River, Ezek. 29. 3, 4. The Wiſe man is apt to glory in his wiſdom, and the ſtrong man in his ſtrength, &c. Jer. 9. 23. Dan. 4. 30, 31. This is the firſt ground of vexation, They muſt leave their wealth to others, Pſal. 49. 10, 12.

V. 19. *And who knoweth whether he ſhall be a wiſe man or a fool?*] 2. And the reaſon of his fore-mentioned diſlike of all his labour, becauſe he muſt leave them to the man that comes next after him, who haply may be very unfit to ſucceed him in ſo wiſe and great works. It is not in mans power to leave the works of his hands, when he muſt himſelf no longer enjoy them, unto ſuch as are moſt likely to improve or preſerve them: but be he what he will, wiſe or fooliſh, he muſt have not only the fruition of my labours, but the dominion over them, Pſal. 39. 6. And this is a great vanity, to know a mans ſelf how to get great things, and to know how to preſerve, and to enjoy them; but not to know what will become of them at the laſt: A wiſe man it may be will alter all; a fool will ſcatter and diſſipate all, and ſo all the fathers wiſdome may quickly come to nought by the ſons folly, Pſal. 39. 7.

Wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have ſhewed my ſelf wiſe] Which by my labour and by my wiſdome I have gotten. He underſtandeth humane wiſdome in managing worldly affairs to the beſt improvement, Iſa. 10. 13. Ezek. 38. 4, 5. Theſe are the two great principles of humane actions, Wiſdome to direct; Labour, to execute: Wiſdome by counſel guideth labour; and Labour through experience encreaſeth wiſdome. That wiſdome is fruitleſs, which doth not produce labour; and that labour is uſeleſs, which is not managed by wiſdome. Some conceive, that Solomon here did foreſee, at leaſt, that Rehoboam by his folly might ſcatter many of thoſe great works, and loſe much of that ample power and wealth which his father by his wiſdome had gotten, 1 Reg. 12. 13, 15.

V. 20. *Therefore I went about to cauſe my heart to deſpair of all the labour*, &c.] *I went about*, or, I circled. The meaning is, Having turned hither and thither to take a view of all humane actions, and every where diſcovering notable vanity in them all, I found my ſelf, after I was wearied in this round, brought at laſt to utter deſpair and deſpondency of ſpirit, being without hope of ever finding out that in any of my labours for which I had undertaken them. When I found,

found, after all my labour, this ſad uncertainty attending on them, that it was out of my power to diſpoſe them for the future ſo, but that they might fall into the hands of a fool that would demoliſh and diſſipate them all; who by his folly, would extinguiſh the monuments of my wiſdome; and by his luxury, the fruits of my labour: Then I beſtirred my ſelf to make my heart deſpair, to call it wholly off from all my labours. The word importeth a deſiſting from a purpoſe or work undertaken, a changing of a mans counſel, finding the attempt to be fruitleſs or unfeaſable, Iſa. 57. 10. Jer. 2. 25. & 18. 12. There is a Rational deſpair, when a man having erroniouſly ſought for ſome good from that which is wholly unable to afford it, doth thereupon give over ſo fruitleſs an inquiry, and betake himſelf to that which is more effectual, Iſa. 55. 2. and there is a paſſionate deſpair proceeding from that frowardneſs of heart which ſuch a diſappointment is apt to produce in carnal minds, when becauſe a man cannot enjoy that good from a thing which he expected, he will therefore wholly fall out with it, though it be otherwiſe good in its degree, and doth bring ſuch comfortable fruit as God appointed it for. This is a ſinful deſpair: For the Lord hath made many promiſes unto the

the labour which we take about outward things, Prov. 12. 24. & 13. 11. & 31. 31. Pſal. 128. 1, 2. And hath a word of bleſſing ever proportionable to thoſe ends and uſes for which he hath appointed them, Deut. 28. 2——8. Matth. 4. 4. If Solomon mean here the former deſpair, then it was an effect of his wiſdome, dictating unto him not to place his hopes upon vain things, which would delude and abuſe him, but to take off his heart from the inordinate love of empty things. If the later, then it was a corrupt and froward averſion from things good in their degree, becauſe the providence of God might haply diſpoſe otherwiſe of them than he deſired. Duty and labour about outward things, belongs unto us, but the diſpoſition of them into what hands he pleaſeth, belongeth unto God. In the mean time, it is a good argument to draw off the heart from anxious and inordinate toyl about worldly things: and rather to imploy our thoughts about the education of our children, leſt much wealth in the hands of a fooliſh ſon, prove an argument of our folly; whereas a little eſtate with principles of wiſdome and piety inſtilled into him that muſt enjoy it, will be a greater bleſſing unto him, and an evidence of more wiſdome in our ſelves.

V. 21. *For there is a man whoſe labour is*

is in wiſdome, &c.] *i. e.* who, 1. by his habitual skill and faculty of contrivance. 2. by his experimental and improved knowledge; and 3. by his juſt, honeſt, and righteous dealing; concurring all 4. with diligent labour, (unto which kind of principles ſo attempered, the bleſſing of God is uſually annexed,) doth get a fair and full eſtate: and when he hath all done, muſt leave it to another who never took thought about it, nor ſtirred hand or foot towards the gathering of it. This is a third reaſon of the wiſe mans wearineſs of his life and labours, namely, that he ſhould be a very drudge for another man, and ſhould uſe all his skill and pains, and ſuffer ſo much anxiety and diſquiet only to purchaſe reſt and idleneſs for his ſucceſſor. And this is a great and ſore evil, that the labour ſhould be one mans, and the fruit thereof anothers, and is often threatned as a puniſhment, Job. 5. 5. Hoſ. 7. 9. & 8. 7. Deut. 28. 30, 31, 32, 33. Pſal. 39. 6. Prov. 13. 22.

ſhall he give it for his portion] Or, *ſhall he give his portion.* That which in all reaſon after ſo much labour ſhould have been the portion of him who laboured for it, he is compelled by death to give or leave it to another man, and ſo to make it that other mans portion.

V. 22.

V. 22. *for what hath man of all his labour, &c.*] What is there unto a man of all his labour? Nehem. 6. 6. *viz.* what profit, comfort, advantage, can a man have of such labour wherein all the pain is his, and all the fruit and benefit another mans? Chap. 1. 3. & 3. 9. Psal. 39 6.

vexation of his heart] Hereby are noted those discruciating, disquieting, careful thoughts, whereby he doth project and contrive within himself all waies of gain, and how to increase and preserve a great estate, Psal. 49. 11. Hab. 2. 5, 6. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. This may refer to all the three Reasons before given; 1. What hath man left to himself of all his labour and vexation when he is dead and gone, all the world is then gone to him, Job 1. 21. 1 Tim. 6. 7. Ps. 49. 17. 2. What good hath he by all that pains which was taken for another man, who if he were wise, would be able to take the pains for himself, and if foolish, will be likely to make all another mans pains fruitless, which he took to provide for him, Job 27. 16, 17. 3. What hath he of all his Labour more than the other man who sate still, and lived quietly, and saw him toyl and drudge to get him an estate who laboured not for it? nothing at all more as to contentment and fruition, much more as to wearines and vexation.

V. 23.

V. 23. *For all his daies are ſorrows, and his travel grief*] &c.] Theſe words are very emphatical, to ſet forth the pain and trouble of ſuch a man who toyls for others: and the wiſe man cloſeth this diſquiſition as he did the firſt, Chap. 1. 18. only this is expreſſed with greater emphaſis, as being the greater evil of the two; as verſ. 21. 1. The words are many, to ſhew the greatneſs of the trouble. 2. The word tranſlated *ſorrows*, ſignifieth a very painful and cruciating grief, the grief of ſome ſore wound, Gen. 34. 25. Jer. 51. 8. and uſed in the caſe of Iſraels ſorrow in their bondage in Egypt, Exod. 3. 7. and in Babylon, Lam. 1. 12. and to expreſs the ſorrows of Chriſt, Iſa. 53. 3, 4. See Job 33. 19. Prov. 14. 13. 3. The abſtract is uſed for the Concrete, it is not ſaid, all his daies are ſorrowful, but very ſorrow it ſelf, which addeth much force to the ſenſe, as Gen. 3. 6. Pſ. 5. 9. & 39. 5. Hag. 2. 8. Gen. 12. 2. Cant. 5. 16. 4. The word is in the plural number, *all his daies are ſorrows*, (*i. e.*) full of ſorrow, great ſorrow, and variety of ſorrow; as Iſa. 63. 6. 2 Pet. 3. 11. So it is ſaid, that the Sodomites were ſmitten with blindneſs, Gen. 19. 11. 2 Cor. 1. 3. Eccl. 5. 6.

and his travel [or anxious and careful labour] *grief.* Or, indignation, his wearisome im-

imployments, full of diſquietneſs, and of continual ſollicitude, meeting withal with many miſcarriages and diſappointments, do ſtir up much grief and diſpleaſure of heart.

Hereby is noted the exceeding great trouble of heart, which ariſeth out of an inordinate converſing about worldly things, and apprehenſion of parting with them. For the leſs meaſure there is in the labour of getting them, the more trouble there is in the thoughts of parting with them. If the life of the beſt men be full of evil and labour, Gen. 47. 9. Pſ. 90. 10. Job. 14. 1. & 5. 7. Our mother brings us forth in ſorrow, and unto ſorrow: much more unquiet muſt be the life of thoſe who labour in the fire, and for very vanity, Habb. 2. 13.

yea, his heart taketh no reſt in the night] The night was appointed by God for man to reſt in, as the day to labour, Pſ. 104. 23. & 127. 2. Job 4. 13. But ſuch a man depriveth himſelf of that bleſſing, which God by the very ſeaſon offers him, Job 7. 3, 4, 13, 14. Eccl. 5. 12, 13. Prov. 3. 24. Or, if ſuch a mans body, through labour and wearineſs, do ſleep, yet his heart is ſtill taken up with unquiet thoughts and cares; for the heart may be awake when the body ſleeps, Cant. 5, 2.

V. 24. *There is nothing better for a man,*

than

than to eat, &c.] In this verse, and so to the end of the Chapter, is contained that which is the whole sum and subject of this book, which is to shew, wherein the only good which a man can attain unto in his labour about worldly things, doth consist, and the happiness of this present life, which is to get the heart seasoned with the fear of God, and to be good in his sight, or approved of him; and then in the assurance and joy of his favour, to make use of all outward good things with quiet contentment, with freedome, chearfulness, and delight, which is a special blessing which the Lord gives unto his own servants. The Apostle puts all this into two words, Godliness and Contentment, 1 Tim, 6.6.

The words admit of a several reading, though all run to the same issue. *There is nothing better for a man, then*——so our version. The word [*then*] according to the reading is to be supplyed, it not being in the Original. And so Interpreters agree, that such a word as *nisi*, or *tantum*, may be understood, as it is necessarily to be supplyed elsewhere; as Isa. 1. 6. where, in the Original, the words run in this manner, *There is no soundness it, wounds and bruises*, &c. where the word *but*, or *only*, is necessarily to be supplyed; no soundness, [*but*] wounds

or

or bruiſes: So here, *There is not good for a man that he eat*; the word *but* is to be ſupplyed, There is not, or it is not good for a man *but* that he eat: It is expreſſed, Chap. 3. 12. Others read the words with an interrogation, *Is it not good for a man that he eat*, &c.? (*i. e.*) It is good. Others read thus, *This good is not in a man*, (*i. e.*) *in the power of a man, that he eat and drink*, &c. As he cannot help it, but he muſt in time leave his outward things, which with ſo much labour he hath gotten, and that to ſuch as, it may be, will not diſpoſe of them to his deſire; ſo even while he doth actually poſſeſs them himſelf, it is not in his power to uſe them, much leſs to enjoy with delight and pleaſure, without the ſpecial gift of God. All amounts to the ſame iſſue; which is this: Since there is in all the ſtudies, labours, affairs of men ſo much vanity and vexation, as hath been here diſcovered, by the ableſt and wiſeſt inquirer into the creature; it remains, if we would effectually free our ſelves from this vanity and vexation, that giving over thoſe anxious and diſquieting labours, we betake our ſelves to a free, chearful, and comfortable uſe of thoſe good things which God hath bleſſed us withal; and that ſo we may do, to commend our ſelves by ſincerity of heart unto God, from whoſe hand and gift

alone

alone this mercy proceedeth, and not from the power or will of man.

make his ſoul ſee, or enjoy good] *i. e.* Make himſelf to enjoy the good which outward bleſſings do afford, the like phraſe making to ſee good is uſed, Pſ. 4. 6. and 50. 23. *ſupra*, verſ. 1.

in his labour] 1. In the fruit of labour, not of idleneſs. 2. Of his own labour, of that which is righteouſly his own, not gotten from others by violence or injuſtice.

this alſo I ſaw that it was from the hand of God] Or the ſpecial gift of God, as verſ. 26. Chap. 3. 13. & 5 19. 1 Chron. 29. 16. It may ſeem but an eaſie thing when man hath, with much toyl and trouble, gotten proviſions about him, to eat the fruit of his own labours, yet he hath no power to do it without Gods bleſſing.

Here we may obſerve. 1. That the utmoſt good of all worldly labours reach no further as to real benefit, then the ſupply of body, Eccleſ. 6. 7. 1 Tim. 6, 7, 8.

2. That it is not in the power of man, after all his hard labour for theſe things, either to uſe them, or with chearfulneſs and joy to delight at all in them, without the ſpecial hand and gift of God; to ſay nothing of ſickneſs, or other diſtempers within, and of robbers without, which may take away the taſte

taſte of any ſweetneſs in them, and conſequently the deſire of them, 2 Sam. 19. 35. Job 33 19,20. ſo that the floor and the wine-preſs ſhal not feed us, Hoſ. 9. 2. & 2. 9. There is ſuch a ſordid and baſe cruelty in the mind of a man towards himſelf, as to defraud and grudge himſelf the fruit of his own labour, Eccl. 6. 2, 4, 8. much leſs can a man with cheerfulneſs, contentment, and ſweet tranquility, make uſe of theſe bleſſings without the ſpecial favour of God unto him therein, Prov. 10. 22. Pſ. 128. 1. 2. Nehem. 8. 10, 12. 1 Chron. 29. 22. Act. 14. 17. Deut. 8. 12——18. Phil. 4, 11, 12, 13.

3. That the happineſs of this life ſtandeth in a free, cheerful and contented enjoyment of the good bleſſings of God, together with the ſenſe and comfort of his fatherly love, 1 Tim. 6. 4.

4. That all the ſweetneſs of outward bleſſings ſtandeth in this, that they are reached out unto us, from the hand, and ſanctified by the bleſſing and grace of a merciful Father, Pſ. 37. 16. Prov. 15. 16. 1 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 17. It is the love of God which puts ſweetneſs into all outward mercies.

5. Honeſt labour whereby a mans bread is his own, is the proper object of our comfortable fruition. Then only we can rejoyce in

in our eating and drinking, and other outward delights, when in them we taſte the ſweet of our righteous labours, Prov. 16. 8. Eph. 5. 28. 2 Theſ. 3. 12.

V. 25. *for who can eat, or who elſe can haſten thereunto more than I?*] He proveth what he had ſaid, that it is the gift of God; becauſe he ſo wiſe, ſo wealthy a Prince, who had ſo great variety to hold up his delight, could of himſelf find nothing in all his great eſtate, but matter of vexation. What power can others have to enjoy them, when he could not; or elſe it may refer to the former part of the fore-going verſe. There is nothing for a man then to eat and drink and enjoy good in his labour: this he proveth by his own experience. As by his own experience, he hath all along proved the vanity and vexation of the creatures in other reſpects; ſo here by his own experience he proveth, that the only tranquility is, having made ſure of the favour of God, to eat and drink with cheerfulneſs. He doth not mean ſenſual Epicure-like ſurfeiting on the creatures, but a quiet and free contented uſe of them; who is fit to eat of my eſtate, and to make haſte ſo to do, *i. e.* readily and cheerfully to do it, then I my ſelf who laboured it? and I unto whom God hath given ſuch plenty, and ſuch readineſs of heart to uſe it, can

can by my own taſte of Gods goodneſs give to others a judgement and aſſurance hereof. So verſ. 10, 12.

who elſe can haſten thereunto more than I?] This noteth a ſpecial promptitude and cheerfulneſs of heart, which Solomon did put forth in the fruition of the good things he had gathered, as Job 20. 2. others read it, who hath taken more care thereunto, to abound in delights and contents then I? Others, who hath quicker ſenſes to diſcern the comforts of them, then I? but the firſt ſenſe ſeemeth more genuine; for as in the former verſe, he ſpake, 1. Of eating and drinking, or of the free uſing of Gods bleſſings. 2. Of making the heart to enjoy them: So here he telleth us that his practiſe, was ſuteable, who can eat? that relates to the former; and who can haſten more than I, that relates to the later.

V. 26. *for God giveth to a man that is good in his ſight, wiſdome, and knowledge, and joy,* &c.] Having commended this free and comfortable uſe of Gods bleſſings with Godlineſs and contentment by the author of it, it is the gift of God: He here further commends it by the ſubject of it, unto whom God doth afford ſo excellent a gift: many gifts of God are common to good and bad men, Matth. 5. 45. 1 Cor. 13. 1, 3. but this

is

is a peculiar bleſſing which he beſtows on his beloved, Pſ. 127. 2. the ſubject of it is a good man; the Character of that good man, he is good in his ſight, good in the judgement of God, who trieth the heart, Gen. 17. 1. 1 Cor. 10. 18. Rom. 12. 1,2. 1 Tim. 2. 3. Heb. 13. 21. The gift of God to this man. 1. Wiſdome to get, 2 Knowledge to uſe, 3. Joy to uſe cheerfully and comfortably all outward bleſſings, and this is illuſtrated by an Antitheſis.

but to the ſinner he giveth travel, to gather and to heap up,] *i. e.* He giveth them up, or leaveth them to their own greedy deſires, to gather and heap together with much anxiety and tormenting ſollicitude, Habb. 2. 6. Luk. 12. 18. Pſ. 39. 6.

That he may give to him that is good before God] That is, that God may diſpoſe of it by his own over-ruling providence, beſides and againſt the purpoſe of the gatherer, to whom he pleaſeth, or to thoſe that fear him, making wicked men but the drudges and purveyors for others. Iſa. 10. 7. Prov. 13. 22. & 28. 8. Job 27. 16, 17. Eſt. 8. 1, 2. Iſa. 65. 13, 14. as wicked men built the Ark, but Noah enjoyed it, according to the Greek proverb, one man makes the garment, but another wears it.

This alſo is vanity] *viz.* for a wicked man to

to labour for others whom he loves not, nor ever intended his labour for.

Here we see, 1. Goodness consists in approving a mans self to God. 2. That sweet and perfect contentment is peculiar unto good men. 3. That wisdome or skill to get riches, is the gift of God, Deut. 8. 18. 4. That knowledge to use them, being gotten, is likewise Gods gift, as vers. 24. 5. That good men only are the proper subject of true joy, Gal. 5. 22. 6. That amongst other curses, God doth many times punish wicked men with giving them up to the insatiable desires of their covetous hearts, to weary themselves in gathering wealth to no purpose of their own, of Eccl. 4. 8. 7. Gods providences, that many times disposeth the labours of wicked men for the use and good of the godly.

CHAP. III.

IN this Chapter the wise man proceedeth, in discovering the vanity of worldly things, and of all mens toil and labour about them, in regard of the total uncertainty of future events, as having their whole dependance on the predeterminate purpose of God, & not at all on the anxious care and thoughts of man. And that therefore since man is not able to alter the series and contexture of events, foreordained by God, he ought with contentment of

of heart to enjoy his condition, and to fear the Lord, & depend on his providence, which is not poſſible for him by all his own ſollicitude to prevent or eſcape. And therefore, though he may cheerfully enjoy preſent bleſſings, yet he muſt not have his heart glued to them, nor build his chiefeſt hope on them, in regard they are ſo variable, and ſubject to unavoidable changes and uncertainties. So that the doctrine of the ten firſt verſes of this Chapter ſeems to be; 1. An argument enforcing the former counſel of the wiſe man, Chap. 2. 24. That ſince there is a ſet and prefixed ſeaſon for all, even the moſt contingent events, and that it is out of the power of man by all his thoughts, counſels & cares, to break through the limits of Gods providence in the guidance of them; therefore our wiſeſt way is to yield our ſelves unto God, to depend on his counſel and proviſion, to reſt contented in that which he gives, and not to diſquiet our ſelves with the cares, fears, hopes of ſuch things, as are wholly without the order of our wiſdome or power. 2. A caveat in the uſe of outward comforts, ſtill to remember that they are changeable, ſubject to time and providence to wear them out, & deprive us of them: and therefore not to be offended, if we have not alwaies our deſires, nor enjoy them ſo long, and in ſo conſtant a tenor of

ſucceſs, as we could wiſh our ſelves. 3. A further obſervation of vanity in outward things, in the various actions of other men, as he had before diſcovered in his own labours.

V. 1. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon*] A predeterminate and an appointed time: So it is uſed, Eſth. 9. 31. Ezra 10. 14. Nehem. 13. 31.

to every purpoſe] To voluntary and contingent things, which ſeem moſt in a mans own power; yet theſe are over-ruled, for their beginning, duration, and ending, by the providence of God. To every purpoſed buſineſs: Where note; 1. That all events in the world, both natural and contingent, voluntary, or fortuitous, are all of them limited and bounded for their beginning, duration and ending, by the providence of God, Pſal. 31. 15. Job 14. 14. Acts 17. 26. So we read of a time for wrath, Pſal. 37. 13. Ezek. 7. 7. Hoſ. 5. 7 Iſa. 40. 2. A time of love, Ezec. 16. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 2. A time to work in, Joh. 2. 4. A time to ſuffer in, Joh. 7. 30. & 8. 20. & 13. 1. & 17. 1. It is great wiſdom for men to obſerve the providences of God in this point, that they may accordingly behave themſelves towards him, 1 Chron. 12. 32. Luk. 19. 42. Eccleſ. 9. 12. Jer. 8. 7. 2. That whatever are the

the thoughts or cares of men, yet the purpoſes of God muſt ſtand; no man can by his anxious fears or contrivances, mend or alter his condition. Means we muſt uſe in obedience unto God, and expectation of his promiſed bleſſing, but events and ſucceſſes we muſt wholly leave to him, Iſa. 46. 10. Prov. 19. 21. Pſal. 33. 10, 11. Matth. 6. 27. Jer. 10. 23. 3. That all things under the Sun are ſubject to continual Changes; there are various revolutions and viciſſitudes of events, now one thing, and anon the contrary, to the intent that men ſhould, neither be wanton in proſperity, nor deſperate in adverſity, but ſhould alwayes fear before the Lord, and ſeek for a kingdome which cannot be ſhaken, 1 Cor. 7. 29—31. Prov. 27. 1. Jam. 4. 13, 14. Dan. 2. 21.

V. 2. The Wiſe man ſubjoyneth an Induction of ſeveral particulars, obvious to every mans experience, whereby he demonſtrateth the truth of this general Propoſition. Some of theſe particulars are things natural, and wholly out of the power of man: others humane and voluntary, ſuch as are done and directed by the Skill of man. To teach us, that all the moſt free and contingent actions are under the Law of Gods providence, directed and limited thereby, as well as thoſe which are moſt natural and neceſſary, 1

Reg. 22. 24. Isa. 10. 5,6,7. Act. 4,27,28.

Some again begin with pleasant instances, and end in sad ones. Others begin with sadness, and end with delight. The Lord as he pleaseth ordering the affairs of men so, as that sometimes they have their good dayes first, and afterwards sorrow: sometimes evil first, and after, deliverance, Luke 16. 25. Job 42. 12. Joh. 21. 18.

Another thing to be remembred here, is, That the Lord doth not by every one of these particulars signifie what is good or lawfull to be done, but only teach us, that not only the good actions of men, but their sins, not only their serious actions, but those which are most Ludicrous and vain, are all of them under the decrees and over-ruling counsels of God, directing of them and their seasons as it pleaseth him, Matth. 10. 29, 30. Gen. 45. 5. & 50. 20. Judg. 21. 21, 22, 23.

A time to be born, or to bear and bring forth] Called the hour of a woman, Joh. 16. 21.

and a time to die] Called the Hour wherein a man must depart, Joh. 13. 1. though the sentence of death hath sometimes been revoked, Isa. 38. 1, 5. yet the predeterminate time fore-fixed in the purpose of God was not altered.

V. 3. *A time to kill*] There is a pro-

dence of God in the violent deaths of men, directing actions either sinfull or fortuitous, as it pleaseth him, 2 Reg. 10. 30. compared with Hos. 1. 4. Exod. 21. 13. 1 Reg. 22. 34. Hos. 6. 1. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Job. 30. 26.

to beat down, and to build] Jer. 1. 10. & 18. 7. & 31. 28. Isa. 5. 2, 5.

V. 4. *A time to weep*] *viz.* From the Lord; for he speaketh all along of the providence of God, in whose hand all our times both of sorrow and of joy are, Psal. 80. 5. Ruth 1. 20, 21.

and a time to laugh] Psal. 126. 1. 2. Gen. 21. 6.

to mourn] As in Funerals and publick calamities, Chap. 12. 5.

to daunce] *i. e.* greatly to rejoyce, and express joy in the outward behaviour, 2 Sam. 6. 14. Act. 3. 8.

5. *A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather them together*] Some by this, understand the erecting of trophies over conquered enemies, as Josh. 8. 29. 2 Sam. 18. 17, 18. Zach. 9. 16. Others, the demolishing or erecting of buildings, all ordered by Gods providence, Luke 13. 4. Judg. 9. 53. Lam. 2. 2, 5, 7, 8, 9. & 4. 1. Zach. 5. 4. Mic. 1. 6. 2 Reg. 3. 25. Mar. 13. 1, 2.

to embrace, and to abstain from embracing] 1 Cor. 7. 5.

V. 6. *to get*] Prov. 10.6.

to cast away] Either out of necessity, as Jon. 1. 5. Act. 27. 18,38. or out of charity, Prov. 11. 24. Eccles. 11. 1. or out of special duty to God, Heb. 10. 34. Matth. 10. 37. 38, 39. and 19. 29.

V. 7. *To rent*] As the custome was in mourning, Job. 1. 20. Joel 2 19.

to speak, to keep silence] According to difference of seasons, Prov. 26. 4, 5. & 25. 11. Amos 5. 13.

V. 8. *A time of war*] 2 Sam. 11. 1.

Thus Solomon by an Induction of divers particulars, and those very various, and each by way of Antithesis with his contrary joyned to him, some natural actions, some civil, some domestical, some vitious, some vertuous, some serious and solemn, others light and ludicrous, some wise, some passionate; by all these he assureth us, that there is a holy and wise work of God in predefining, ordering, limiting, tempering, disposing of all these and the like affairs of men, and so qualifying in the life of a man one contrary with another, and ballancing prosperity and adversity by each other, that in every condition a good man may find cause of praising God, and of trusting in him, and of exercising this tranquility and contentment of mind, even in contrary conditions be-

cause

James

cauſe the holy hand of God is in the one, as well as in the other, Job. 1. 21. Phil. 4. 11, 12.

V. 9. *What profit hath he that worketh, in that wherein he laboureth?* As Chap. 1. 3. Matth. 6. 27. In vain is it for a man by any anxious toyl to go about to effect any thing according to his own will, if the counſel and providence of God be againſt it. When he builds, God may pull down, or put in ſome accident and caſual event which ſhall divert, or undo all: Yet he doth not intend to reſtrain men from needfull Labour in their Callings; but from truſting in or building on their Labours, and fretting if ſuch fruits follow not thereupon as they intended and expected; but patiently to ſubmit to the holy Will of God, unto whom it belongeth to diſpoſe of our perſons, of our liberties as it pleaſeth him. Whence obſerve, That carking and caring is indeed a ſtriving with the irreſiſtable providence of God, which no labour of ours can alter, or bend to our wills, Iſa. 45. 9. Jon. 4. 1, 8, 9. as on the other ſide, glorying of our own ſtrength and wiſdome, is a robbing him of his honour, Deut. 8. 17, 18. Habak. 1. 16. Labour is ſubordinate unto providence, but muſt never ſtrive with it. There is no profit to any man in his Labour, without Gods bleſſing,

which therefore he must pray for, and rejoyce in, without fruitless anxiety for the future.

V, 10. *I have seen the travel*] Chap. 1. 13. men might be apt to think when they see so many turns and changes in the world, that all things are carried by a blind and rash disorder, casually and uncertainly, as it falls out, without any beauty or order in them. To this he answers, That it is God who hath given unto men this travel to exercise themselves in various and contrary imployments, passions, events, and that he doth, though we do not suddenly observe it, direct them all unto a beautifull issue: all these contraries work together for good, Rom. 8. 28. Again, men might think on the other hand, If man have indeed no profit of all his labour, but when all is done, God alone orders the Event, then to what end should he weary himself in so fruitless an imployment? To this also there is an answer in these words; God hath given to man his work, which he is to undertake in obedience to Gods command: and God doth usually dispense his mercies unto us in the use of means, and by a blessing on our labours, Prov. 10. 4, 22. Joh. 21. 3, 6. Act. 27. 22, 31. And though Labour do not effect what we expected from it, but Gods providence

dence ſhould (as ſometimes it doth) act contrary to, or diverſly from our endeavours, yet this good there is in honeſt Labour alone, and this End God hath in requiring it of us, we are Exerciſed therein, and ſo kept from idleneſs, and the evil effects which would follow thereupon. Labour is not only a duty, but in this reſpect beneficial, (even when it miſcarrieth as to the principal end aimed at in it) that the heart is thereby kept in that ſtation and order wherein God did originally ſet it, Gen. 3. 17, 18, 19.

V. 11. *He hath made every thing beautifull in his time, or in the time and proper ſeaſon thereof.*] This is a further commendation of the wiſe providence of God in the government of the world, and all the events which happen in it, to the end that men may with more quietneſs and contentment acquieſce therein. We might be apt to ſtumble and be offended at the ſeeming confuſions which are in the world, and the great uncertainty of affairs therein. But howſoever it ſeem ſo unto us, who are not able to put together all the pieces of Gods providence, nor to foreſee that frame and feature which he will form them unto at the laſt, yet this is certain, that as in the work of Creation all things were very good, Gen. 1. 31. So in the work of Gubernation and

Providence, All things will at last apppear to be very beautiful, and those things which seemed but as confused heaps when they lay asunder, will when Gods whole work is done, (Isa. 10. 12.) and they are all put together, appear to have been full of order, and decorum: as beauty in the body ariseth out of an equal temperament of contraries together, and so in a curious piece of hanging various colours wisely mixed, make an elegant piece: and letters which in the Printers boxes seem all confused, and signifie nothing: yet being set together by an exquisite Copy, they afford us a learned and elaborate work; as we see in the History of Joseph and his brethren, of Davids troubles and Kingdom: of Mordecai, Esther, and Haman, of the Jews crucifying of Christ, &c.

Again, God *hath made every thing beautifull in its time*] As cold, and frost, are as orderly, as necessary, as usefull in the winter, the season for them, as fruits, and flowers, and other delights are in the summer. Sorrow and Affliction is in the season of it as usefull and needfull for men, and in its kind as beautifull, as mirth and joy in another season, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Jam. 1. 2, 3. & 5. 7, 11. Eccles. 7. 13, 14. Ps. 104. 24.

also he hath set the world in their heart, &c.] These words are in this place very difficult,

difficult, and variouſly both rendred, and underſtood. Some read them thus, *Quamdiu ſeculum eſt*, as long as the world, or worldly things continue, the Lord doth put into the mind of man the work which God doth from the beginning to the end, excepting only that which man cannot find out, or attain unto: and ſo the ſenſe to be, That God hath in the book of the world, and of his providence in the Government of all things therein, ſo legibly repreſented to the mind of man his righteous and beautifull ordering of them all, that man may if he ſet himſelf about it, eaſily diſcover Gods wonderfull wiſdom therein; as Act. 14. 17. Rom. 1. 19, 20. onely indeed ſome things are unſearchable to humane reaſon, which he is to admire and adore, waiting till the time of the revelation of Gods righteous Judgements for the full and diſtinct underſtanding of them, Rom. 11. 33, 34. Job. 9. 10. & 11. 7, 8, 9. Others, by putting the world in mens hearts, underſtand according to one of the uſual acceptions of the word, עולם, a deſire implanted in man of eternity and perpetuity, and ſo the ſenſe to be, That albeit God doth make every thing good and beautifull, yet the heart of man is ſo ſet upon immortality, that he cannot provide amongſt any of Gods works here which have a beginning

and

and an end, or are measured by time, any thing wherein his heart may fully and finally rest.

But that which seems most agreeable to the scope of the place, and grammar of the words, is this; God hath indeed made every thing beautifull in his time, and thereupon men ought with quiet and cheerfull hearts to observe Gods providence in all things, and therein to rest, without anxiety or discruciating care: but man cannot find out the work of God, nor observe the beauty thereof so exactly as he should, which is the reason that he doth not so patiently acquiesce therein. Of this defect he giveth two reasons:

1. That they have the world in their hearts, they are so taken up with the thoughts and cares of worldly things, and are so exercised in the sore travel belonging unto them, that they do not naturally look up to the wise and holy disposition of God, so as to rest therein. This duty is the remedy of such cares, Matth. 6. 26, 30, 32. and such cares as are the hindrance of this duty.

2. They cannot *find out the work which God doth from the beginning to the end*] Man being of short continuance doth not many times live to observe a full point in the works of God. Their beginning may be in one

one age, and their end in another. That part which I ſee in my dayes, may appear to me full of diſorder and confuſion, as heaps of ſtone and lime, and other proviſions towards a goodly building: whereas if I did live to ſee the end of God in ſuch works, it would appear, that in their time, or maturity they would be full of beauty: that fruit which is moſt ſweet and delicate in its ſeaſon, is ſour and unpleaſant while it is yet green. It is the End of Gods work which ſets forth its beauty. Works of Providence, as works of Creation, may begin in a Chaos, and ſeem without form and void, Gen. 1. 2. but they end in admirable order and beauty, Chap. 8. 17. Pſal. 37. 37, 38. Jam. 5. 11. Hab. 2. 3. So here is the doctrine of the excellent beauty which is in Gods Providence. The reaſon why man is not thereby perſwaded unto contentment and patience in all eſtates, namely, his natural impotency to obſerve the ſame. The grounds of that Impotency, 1. His worldly-mindedneſs. 2. His ſhort continuance: yet he ought by faith, and by the evidence of Gods dealings in other ages, to rectifie this defect, and upon that ground to build his cheerfull enjoyment of bleſſing while God beſtows them upon him. So it follows,

V. 12. *I know that there is no good in them:*

but

but for, &c.] I know by my tryal and experience, that there is no good in or for them, *i. e.* for men; but only with contentment of heart to rejoyce in Gods bleſſings, and to do good in his life, *i. e.* to live in the fear of God; as Chap. 2. 24, 25. or to do good unto themſelves in a liberal enjoyment of their life and labours, as Pſal. 49. 18. or to do good to others in the time of their joy, as Neh. 8. 10, 12.

V. 13. *And alſo that every man ſhould eat*, &c.] Here are the parts of this contentment, to eat, drink, enjoy our labours, and to rejoyce in them. Whereby is meant not a gluttonous, luxurious, and intemperate uſe of theſe things, as they, 1 Cor. 15. 32. Matth. 44. 49. but a free and comfortable uſe, without anxious thoughts for the future, moderated by the fear of God, as before, Chap. 2. 24.

V. 14. *I know that whatſoever God doth it ſhall be for ever*, &c.] Here from the unchangeableneſs of Gods providence, the permanent and irrecoverable courſe of his counſels, the Abſolute perfection of his works, wherein there is nothing defective, which requires addition, nothing ſuperfluous, or to be taken from them; he doth further teach us with willingneſs and contentment to ſubmit to God, whoſe Counſels we are not

notable by all our cares to alter or disanul.

shall be for ever] The works themselves may alter and vanish, but the Counsel of God is constant and immutable, and he doth in a stable and fixed way dispose of all things to holy ends, beyond the power of any Creature, either to alter or evade it, Mal. 3. 6. His decrees are like chariots proceeding out of mountains of brass to note firmitude and immutability, Zach. 6. 1, 2. which no power can shake or remove, Isa. 38. 10, Job 38. 31——35. & 40. 8. & 42. 2. Job 9. 12. Isa. 14. 27. & 46. 10.

and God doth it, that men should fear before him] Gods decrees and immutable providence should not drive us either into despair and a wilfull neglect of all means, in the use whereof God expecteth that we should wait upon him, and in which as in the way of his providence, he useth to work good for his people; nor do they allow us to lean on our own wisdome, and to deifie our own councels, or burn incense to our own nets; but by them we are taught, in consideration of the Soveraignty, power, and wisdom of God in all things, to stand in awe of him, to submit unto him; in blessings to be thankfull, in sufferings to be patient, because still it is the Lord that decrees, orders, disposeth and over-ruleth all, Job 1. 21. 1 Sam.

Sam. 3.18. 2 Sam. 15.25,26. Psal. 37.5,7.

V. 15. *That which hath been, is now, and that which is to be, &c.*] Chap. 1.9. This is an explication of what was last said, V. 14. to shew how what God doth, is for ever: The things themselves pass, and others succeed in their places, but this series of things is carried on regularly and uniformly by a standing Law and fixed decree, appointing a perpetual and proportionable Succession of things one after another, as it hath been from the beginning, Gen. 8. 22. Jer. 31. 35, 36. Job 38. 10, 33.

and God requireth that which is past.] That which time thrusteth forward, and so maketh to be past, God restores and brings it back again. And this is also an excellent argument of contentment in our estate, be it what it will: 1. Because God dealeth not in a strange and unusual manner with us, otherwise then with others before us; that which now is our Case, hath been the case of other good men, and will be the case of others when we are gone, 1 Cor. 10. 13. A humame Temptation there, is that which God doth usually exercise men withall, as elsewhere the rod of a man, 2 Sam. 7. 14. 2. Because God tempereth our lives, and doth not keep us alwayes in one and the same estate. In trouble he bringeth back

and

and reſtoreth comfort to thoſe that wait on on him, Pſal. 126. 1, 4. as to Job, Chap. 42. 12. In abundance, he can ſhake our mountain which we thought immovable, and bring back our ſorrows again, Pſal. 30. 6, 7. ſo that in both reſpects we ought to carry an awfull, reverend, and humble heart towards God in all conditions, quietly referring our ſelves in every eſtate unto his Fatherly diſpoſal, who beſt knoweth what is good for us.

V. 16. *And moreover I ſaw under the Sun the place of Judgement*, &c.] I ſaw another Vanity under the Sun. Having formerly ſhewed the vanity of knowledge, and of pleaſures, and of humane Labours, in regard of the internal anxiety & travel of mind that doth accompany them, and of the external changes they are ſubject unto, and manifold miſcarriages and diſappointments which are incident unto them, together with the remedy hereof, a free and cheerfull enjoyment of Gods bleſſings with piety towards him for the preſent; and a comfortable dependance on his holy providence, with godly fear for the future: upon a viſible objection which might be made againſt the providence of God, (which he had ſo much commended) with which Temptation many good men have been ſhaken, to wit, the proſperous impiety and oppreſſions of wicked

ked men, and the ſad condition of the innocent and oppreſſed, Job 21. 3.——13. Pſal. 7. 2.——5. Jer. 12. 1. Habak. 1. 13, 14. he proceedeth to vindicate the doctrine of providence, and to ſhew the vanity of men in honour and great place without the fear of God: (for all the vanities in this book are ſtill to be underſtood in that ſenſe, the fear of God being the remedy of it, and that which maketh all other outward good things ſweet and comfortable to us,) The greateſt honour without a holy uſe of it, is ſo far from making a man happy, that it is an occaſion of much wickedneſs amongſt men, one man proving a devil and wolf unto another, and making no other uſe of power, then lyons or bears do, to miſchief others by. This wickedneſs is aggravated, in that it was committed under the pretence of Gods Ordinance; Magiſtracy and Courts of Juſtice were erected by Gods appointment to be Sanctuaries and places of refuge for wronged innocency to repair unto for ſuccour and relief: now then, for thoſe who were ordained to comfort and help poor and oppreſſed perſons, to be themſelves through bribery, partiality, and injuſtice, the greateſt oppreſſors, and that with ſo high a hand, as to make the very tribunals of judgement, to be ſlaughter-houſes, and ſhops of cruelty, This was a great

great vanity amongſt men, and a great Temptation whereby a poor mans comfortably waiting on the providence of God is in danger to be ſhaken.

We here note, 1. That power without Piety, is very apt to degenerate into cruelty and oppreſſion. It is an unweildy and a wilfull thing, that wants much ballance of humility and ſelf-denyal to temper and allay it, Iſa. 1. 21, 22, 23. & 10. 13, 14. Jer. 22. 14, 17. Mic. 3. 9, 10, 11. Habak. 1. 13, 14. Ezek. 22. 25.

2. That it is the height of impiety, to fetch power and advantage from any ordinance of God, to commit it, Iſa. 5. 20. 1. Sam. 2. 17. Jer. 23. 25, 38. Jer. 14. 14, 15. 1 Reg. 22. 11, 12, 24. Joh. 19. 10. Iſa. 36. 10. Mal. 2. 8.

3. That wickedneſs is many times groſly aggravated by the circumſtance of place where it is committed, Hoſ. 6. 8. Ezek. 8. 6, 9, 17. Iſa. 27. 10. Mal. 1. 7. Matth. 21. 12, 13.

and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there] This is the ſame thing repeated, as the uſe of that tongue, and of the Scripture is, whereby may be ſignified, How uſual a thing it was in places of Judgement, here and there, one as well as another, to find this corruption, Jer. 5. 5. Iſa. 5. 7.

V. 17.

V. 17. *I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, &c.* This is the censure Solomon passeth upon this vanity, that though power do oppress, and the poor be oppressed, yet this ought not to discourage good men from contented waiting on the providence of God, nor to encourage or embolden wicked men in their wayes of tyranny or oppression, because the Lord will in due time review all again, and pass a righteous judgement upon the one and the other.

I said in mine heart] I comforted my heart against this vanity by the consideration of the righteous Judgement of God.

God will judge the righteous] By a sentence of absolution.

and the wicked] By a sentence of condemnation.

for there is a time there] (*i. e.*) With God, in the judgement to come. The antecedent is to be understood in the relative, as Num. 7. 89. Him, for, God, Esth. 9. 25. She, for Esther, Psal. 114. 2. His Sanctuary, for, Gods Sanctuary, Job 1. 21. *naked shall I return thither*; namely to the earth.

Here we see, 1. That faith can look on the pride and power of wicked men as a very vain thing, even when they are in the height of their greatness, Job. 5. 3. Psal. 92. 7.

7. & 39. 5, 37. & 10. 20. & 35. 36. Habbak. 2. 7. Luk. 12. 20.

2. That it is matter of comfort to men oppreſſed, that the Lord will judge their cauſe over again, and right them againſt their oppreſſours. Therefore they ought patiently to wait on him, and to expect what iſſue he will give them out of their troubles, Eccleſ. 5. 8. Jam. 5. 7. Pſal. 7. 6, 7, 8, 9, 11. & 9. 4, 9.

3. There is a prefixed time beyond which God will no longer ſuffer innocency to be oppreſſed, nor tyranny to prevail, and we are patiently to wait for Gods time, who will certainly come when wicked men have filled up their meaſure, Act. 17. 31. Jam. 5. 7, 8. Job. 21. 30. Pſal. 37. 13. Habbak. 2. 3. Zach. 5. 5——7.

V. 18. *I ſaid in my heart concerning the eſtate of the ſons of men*] The order, condition, manner of men, or concerning men themſelves, as Pſal. 110. 4. Eccleſ. 8. 2. or concerning the degrees of men, ſuperiours and inferiours.

That God might manifeſt them] I ſaw that man being in power, did not, could not rightly conſider his own frail condition, and therefore that God muſt manifeſt them, in his righteous judgement, or by his word unto themſelves, and make them know their

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own natural vileneſs, and that they are, as to outward reſpects, but as the beaſts that periſh, Pſal. 49. 20. as Pſal. 82. 6, 7. ye are Gods by office, but ye ſhall die like men; ſo here, men by reaſon, by power, by dignity, But ye ſhall die like beaſts. Others thus, That they might clear, or purge God when he judgeth them, and ſhall make them ſee that they lived like beaſts, Pſal. 51. 4. Others, that God indeed hath choſen and advanced them to dignity, but by what is ſeen, and doth outwardly appear of them, they are by their cruelty and injuſtice, no better then beaſts; as Mic. 3. 3. Zeph. 3. 3.

That they themſelves are Beaſts.] Heb. *A Beaſt.* Or that theſe are as a Beaſt to thoſe, or as a beaſt to one another; the ſingular number is put collectively, they act the part of all kind of hurtful beaſts one towards another: ſo Chriſt called Herod a fox, Luk. 13. 32. and the hypocritical Jews, vipers. Luk. 3. 7. See Pſal. 22. 12, 16. & 10. & 57. 4. 2 Tim. 4. 17. Pſ. 80. 13. Ezek. 22. 27. Jer. 5. 6. Pſal. 68. 30. Amos 4. 1. Mat. 7. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 22. Ezek. 2. 6.

Some render theſe words על־דברת בני האדם by *Secundum rationem humanam*; and thence infer, that Solomon ſpeaketh here according to the judgment of carnal and corrupt reaſon, and under a Proſopopœia, doth deliver the judgment of Atheiſts and Epicures,

cures, touching the mortality of the Soul, and the total parity of condition between men & beaſts in regard of mortality, who thence allow themſelves in all kinds of violence, oppreſſion and luxury: and ſo they underſtand all that follows to the end of this Chapter, to be ſpoken as in the perſon of an Epicure and Atheiſt: The ſame events happen to man and beaſt, their end the ſame, their original and matter the ſame, their ſenſes, breath, notions the ſame, their ſoul alike earthly, for who knows that mans goes upward more then a beaſts, and therefore it is equal, that they ſhould live ſenſually, without fear or care for the future, as beaſts do.

But the neceſſity of ſuch a ſenſe doth not appear, ſince the wiſe mans purpoſe here ſeemeth to be no other but to humble the higheſt of men, as in the former words, by conſideration of Gods Judgement over them; ſo in theſe to the 21. verſe, by the conſideration of their own mortal and earthly condition; wherein as to many particulars they agree with the brute beaſts: for he ſpeaks not here of mans immortal or heavenly Condition; but throughout this Book the Scope is to ſhew the vanity of earthly things, and of humane actions in order unto things under the Sun; which vanity is by no means to be remedied, but only by the fear of God. The

vanity

vanity of all the honours and labours of this life, he here discovereth by the equal condition in mere outward respects between men and beasts.

V. 19. *For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them*] For as for the Event of the sons of men, and for the Event of beasts, one Event is to them both, Psal. 49. 10.

as the one dieth, so dieth the other] Or, *as is the death of the one, so is the death of the other*, Chap. 2. 15, 16.

they have all one breath] They draw in and out the same air; by the same kind of vital organs, mans breath is in his nostrils, as the breath of beasts, Isa. 2. 22. Job 27. 3, 4. Gen. 2. 7. He speaks not of the soul of man, but of Animal and vital breath, which is common to both, Ezek. 37. 5. 10. So we read of the common provisions which God makes in regard of this life, for beasts, birds, fishes, and men, and the common fate which attends them all, Psal. 104. 11, 12, 14, 15, 21, 23, 27——30.

so that a man hath no preheminence above a beast] In outward respects, without piety to raise him above a mere corporal and sensual use of them: nay in many outward things beasts have the preheminence, some more strength, others more agility; some more exquisite

exquiſite ſenſes, others longer life, moſt more healthy, more hardy, able to work more, able to bear and endure more, then man.

for all is vanity] All equally vain and mortal.

V. 20. *All go into one place, all are of the duſt, and all return to duſt again*] As they agree in one vital principle, ſo are they ſubject to one Law of mortality, their original, in regard of bodily conſtitution, the ſame, and by diſſolution their condition in regard of bodies the ſame, Gen. 3. 19. Job 34. 15. Pſal. 22. 16. We muſt ſtill remember, that he ſpeaketh of mans mere natural condition, as he is under the Sun. Otherwiſe, in regard of mans future condition, his body is again to be raiſed, and brought to Judgement.

V. 21. *Who knoweth the ſpirit of man that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of the beaſt which goeth downward to the earth?*] It is true indeed there is a future happineſs belonging unto men who have immortal ſouls, which beaſts have no right unto, nor are capable of; The ſoul of the one goes upward, Chap. 12. 7. Luk. 18. 22. Act. 7. 59. whereas the ſouls of beaſts periſh. But no man can by ſenſe diſcern the aſcent of the one, or the deſcent of the other; and Solomon ſpeaks not of mans

future celeſtial happineſs in this Book, but of the vanity of all outward thiugs, without true piety, to ſatisfie the heart of man while he is under the Sun. As for the other celeſtial happineſs, it cannot be diſcerned by a natural diſquiſition, but is revealed in the word unto a few, 1 Cor. 2. 9—11.

V. 22. *Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, then that a man ſhould rejoyce in his own works*] He repeats his former concluſion, Chap. 2. 23. & 3. 13. from theſe vanities, ſince there is ſo little difference in outward things between a man and a beaſt; therefore to remedy this vanity, he is in the fear of God, while he liveth, to enjoy with cheerfulneſs andcontentment his own labours; for that only which he ſo doth enjoy, is his own portion: and not to trouble himſelf with thoughts or cares for the future, ſince being gone, he hath no more ſhare in them, nor knowledge of them.

for who ſhall bring him to ſee what ſhall be after him?] If he hoard them up for others, and uſe them not himſelf, what good will he have of them when he is gone? Who can foretell him what uſe ſhall be made of them, what good ſhall be done with them; therefore let him take comfort of them himſelf before he die, Chap. 5. 18.

CHAP. IV

CHAP. IV.

HAving ſhewed the vanity of oppreſſion, and injuſtice in thoſe who are in place of power and judgement, who carry themſelves like beaſts to their brethren, and muſt themſelves die like beaſts, un-deſired, un-lamented. He ſheweth further in this Chapter divers other vanities, which are conſequents upon oppreſſion, and miſgovernment; both in perſons oppreſſed, whoſe life is a wearineſs to them, Verſe 1, 2, 3. and in other men; who thereby are ſubject to be envied for their induſtry and proſperity, Verſe 4. and thereupon ſome fooliſhly give over all imployments, Verſe 5, 6. Others ſcrape together what they can get, and live privately alone, out of the eye of the world, and from being obſerved, Verſe 8. and thereupon he returneth to ſhew the vanity even of the greateſt power, when it thus oppreſſeth the people, Verſ. 13, 14. yea, the moſt regular power, through the mutability of the affections of the people, Verſe 15, 16.

Verſ. 1. *SO I returned, and conſidered all the oppreſſions*, &c.] Returned and conſidered, (*i. e.*) conſidered again; the verb is put for the adverb, as is uſual in Scripture, in verbs which ſignifie repeating, or iterating of an action; as Gen. 25. 1. Abraham added and took a wife, (*i. e.*) took another wife, or married again. Pſal. 106. 13. They made haſte and forgat, (*i. e.*) They ſoon forgat: Hoſ. 9. 9. They were profound, and corrupted themſelves, (*i. e.*) They deeply corrupted themſelves: So Iſa. 64. 4. Gen. 26. 18. Rom. 10. 20. Pſal. 6. 10. He had conſidered violence and injuſtice in the ſeat of judgement, before Chap. 3. 16. and had ſhewed the vanity of that, and yet notwithſtanding that a good man ſhould endeavour to rejoyce in his labours. But when he looks on it again he finds inſtead of rejoycing, nothing but the tears of oppreſſed men, without ſtrength in themſelves, without comfort from others, which muſt needs render their lives very grievous and irkſome to them.

all the oppreſſions] It importeth, either violent, or fraudulent detaining of mens goods or rights from them, Jer. 22. 3. Luk. 3. 14. and 19. 8. 1 Theſſ. 4. 6. Jerem. 5. 26, 27.

and behold the tears of ſuch as were oppreſſed] The greatneſs of this evil is ſet forth, 1. By the grief of ſuch poor oppreſſed perſons, it ſqueezed forth tears out of their eyes, Lam. 1. 2. 2. By their helpleſneſs, *they had no comforter*: It is ſome eaſe of a man in ſorrow, to ſee others pity him, and a great aggravation of miſery to be without a comforter, when a mans adverſaries are ſo powerfull, ſo malicious and cruel, that others are affraid, ſo much as to pity him, Job. 6. 14, 15. and 19. 21. 3. By their impotency to eſcape from the hand of their oppreſſours. So much is implyed in the next words, which way ever we read them, whether ſo, as to repeat the negative of the former clauſe with the later, which is uſual, Pſal. 1. 5. Job 30. 20, 25. & 31. 20. thus, *And no power from the hand of their oppreſſours*, namely, *to eſcape from them*. They have no power but to weep, none to help themſelves. Or elſe, as we read it, *On the ſide of their oppreſſors there is power, ſo much as to keep others from comforting them*. So the word *hand*, is ſometimes rendred by the word *ſide*, Pſal. 140. 6. Prov. 8. 3. The doubling of that clauſe, notes the ſadneſs of their condition; as Job calls once and again for pity, Job 19. 21.

V. 2 *Wherefore I praiſed the dead which are already dead*, &c.] I eſteemed the dead more happy. *The dead which are already dead*; this is emphatical; our mortality, makes us, as it were, dead while we live, much more our luſts, Matth. 8. 22. Eph. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Rev. 3. 1. Prov. 9. 18. There are dead men that are yet living, and dead men that are already dead. Men are ſaid to be dead likewiſe that are in any deſperate condition; under any invincible calamity, as Jews in Babylon, Iſa. 26. 19. Ezek. 37. 11, 12, 13. 1 Cor. 15. 31. 2 Cor. 1. 9, 10. Oppreſſion is, in the Scripture account, a killing, a devouring of poor men, eating them up, gnawing their bones, Hab. 1. 13. Pſal. 10. 8——10. & 14. 4. Zeph. 3. 3. Ezek. 22. 27. Mic. 3. 2. 3. Pſal. 8. 3, 4, 5. The emphaſis then of the place is this, I eſteemed thoſe more happy who are already quite dead, then thoſe who do thus continually die, and languiſh away under the cruelties of their oppreſſors. This may ſeem to be ſpoken after the judgement of the fleſh, becauſe grievous miſeries and oppreſſions make men weary of their life, and chuſe rather to die. Death is a haven to ſuch a ſoul after ſhipwrack, Job. 3. 13—16. Jon. 4. 3. 1 Reg. 19. 4. And indeed life being the greateſt of mere outward bleſ-

ſings,

ſings, and that whereunto all the reſt are ordered, Matth. 6. 25. it can hardly be either rationally or pionſly undervalued, becauſe of the evils which cruſh and lie heavy on it, or the contrary thereunto deſired, ſave only in order to the eſcaping evils which are worſe then death, and to obtaining of good things which are better then life. In which ſenſe the Apoſtle deſired to depart, that he might be with Chriſt, Phil. 1. 23. Therefore he here ſpeaketh according to the judgement of men under oppreſſion, and who lie groaning and ſighing amidſt many miſeries, whoſe reaſon is darkned by the weight of their ſorrows; for oppreſſion, in this ſenſe, makes even a wiſe man mad, Chap. 7. 7.

more then the living who are yet alive] By the living who are yet alive, he ſeems to mean thoſe poor men, who languiſh and pine away under their oppreſſions, of whom we can ſay only, as we do of a man ready to die, He is yet alive, his breath is not quite gone, he doth live, and that is all; as Luk. 10. 30. He doth not ſimply prefer death before life; but the eaſe and quietneſs of death, before the miſeries and ſufferings of a dying life, Job. 3. 17. 18, 19.

V. 3. *Yea, better is he then both they*, &c.] He ſpeaketh only according to the judgment

of ſenſe, and with relation to the greatneſs of outward miſeries, which he, who is yet unborn, hath not ſeen in others, or felt in himſelf, Job. 3. 10. & 10. 18, 19.

ſeen the evil] To ſee good is to enjoy it, Chap. 2. 24. To ſee evil is to have experience of it, and to ſuffer it; in which ſenſe the Serpent told Eve, that her eyes ſhould be opened to know good by the loſs, and evil by the danger of it, Gen 3. 5. and this kind of not being, or not having been born, though it cannot reaſonably or piouſly be preferred before a ſorrowfull life, which will conſiſt with the fear of God, yet it may, before a curſed condition, which ſinks a man under the wrath of God, Matth. 26. 24.

Here then we may obſerve, 1. The ſad condition of men under the power of oppreſſors, when they have not ſo much abatement of their Miſery as to be pitied. 2. The cruelty of powerfull oppreſſors, which deterrs others from compaſſionating thoſe whom they oppreſs. 3. The dangerous temptation which oppreſſion expoſeth men unto, even to be weary of life, as we ſee in the caſe of Job, Jonah, Eliah, and others. 4. The inconvenience in caſes of difficulty, which relate any way to conſcience, to conſult with carnal reaſon, which will eaſily lead us into extreams.

V. 4.

V. 4. *Again, I conſidered all travel and every right work*] Here he proceedeth to another vanity, ariſing out of the former of oppreſſion and miſgovernment, under which men uſually are diſcouraged from all ingenious and uſefull undertakings, from all noble enterprizes of any ſort, by reaſon of the envy and danger, which, partly through the jealouſies of ſuperiours, partly through the malignancy and evil eye of equals, or inferiours, they are by their eminency and induſtry expoſed unto. By *every right work*, we are to underſtand not ſo much works done in integrity towards God, as the ingenious and accurate works of humane iſſue, done by the wiſdom and practick cunning of Artificers in any kind; ſuch as the wiſdom of Bezaleel, Exod. 31. 3, 4. and Hiram, 1 Reg. 7. 14.

that for this a man is envied of his neighbour] That the more he deſerves for his induſtry, and ingeniouſneſs of invention, the more he is expoſed to envie and danger; envie being like thoſe moths and cankers which uſually feed on the richeſt garments, as we ſee in many examples, Gen. 4. 5. Numb. 11. 27——29. 1 Sam. 18. 7, 8. Gen. 26. 12——14. & 37. 8. 1 Sam. 17. 28. Dan. 6. 3, 4, &c. And this is a great vanity and diſappointment, when that from

whence a man might have expected credit and thanks from the world, shall procure him hatred and danger, and must needs thereupon be a great disquieting of heart, and discouragement against so fruitless endeavours, Prov. 37. 4. Psal. 73. 12, 13.

V. 5. *The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh*] This is one fruit of this danger and envie, taken up by foolish and sloathfull men, they refuse to take pains, and rather chuse to be poor then to be envied. Here is the character of an idle person, 1. He is a fool, to make so absurd an inference, that for fear of envie and trouble, will not only neglect duty, but undo himself. 2. *He foldeth his hands*; puts himself into a posture of idleness, composeth himself to do nothing. Labour requireth the stretching forth of the hands, Prov. 31. 19. Laziness wraps them up in one another, Prov. 6. 9, 10. & 26. 14. & 19. 24. 3. He *eateth his own flesh*; bringeth himself to extreme poverty, contracteth weakness in his body, enfeebleth his mind, wasteth his stock, consumeth his family, bringeth the curse of beggary upon himself and his. For as the diligent hand maketh rich, Prov. 13. 11. So the slack hand maketh poor, Prov. 10. 4. He thinks it a part of wisdom to spare his pains

and

and ſit quiet; and becauſe he cannot attain ſo much dexterity and skill as a other man, therefore enviouſly to ſit down and gnaw his own fleſh, either with hunger or indignation, Prov. 26. 16. Whereas indeed he is a fool, (*i. e.*) 1. A wicked man, in neglecting the duty of labour, which he oweth to himſelf, to his family, to his generation, and whereunto by the ordinance of God he is appointed, Gen. 3. 19. Tit. 3. 14. 1 Theſſ. 3. 10, 11. 2. An abſurd man, to reaſon himſelf into contempt and beggary, and to be cruel to himſelf, becauſe he is fretted at other men, Prov. 11. 17. Pſ. 27. 2. For as he had before touched the vanity which ariſeth from others, ſo here that which ariſeth from a mans own ſelf.

V. 6. *Better is an handful with quietneſs, than both the hands full with trouble and vexation of ſpirit*] This may be here taken, either as Solmons own words, and then to import a ſeaſonable remedy againſt the evils here ſpoken of, *viz.* envy, idleneſs, and covetouſneſs, namely, ſweet contentment with a competent eſtate, rather than vexation with a greater, Prov. 15. 16, 17. & 17. 1. Pſ. 37. 16. Luk. 12. 15. Or rather as the words of the ſluggard, and then they are his apology for his lazineſs: If he ſtrive to excel in his profeſſion, he ſhall many waies diſquiet himſelf

ſelf, he cannot do it without much travel, nor after all that travel be free from much envy & danger. And therefore he rather chuſeth a ſmaller portion, with more eaſe and contentment. In which, there is a great deal of falſe arguing; 1. It is falſe, when he calleth his ſlothful and idle way of living, reſt or quietneſs. For true tranquility of mind is the conſequent of a fruitful converſation, Pſ. 119. 165. bodily reſt a fruit of honeſt labour, Pſ. 127. 2. Eccl. 5. 12. 2. It is falſe, when he calleth induſtry in a mans courſe of life, vexation of ſpirit, whereas honeſt labour taketh off the heart from many vain thoughts and deſires, which would more ſorely vex it. 3. It is a great prophaneſs to palliate his own ſin, under the name of reſt and quietneſs of ſpirit, and under the protection of Gods own truth to find an hiding place for his bruitiſhneſs and ſenſuality; as Saul pretended ſacrifice to excuſe rebellion, 1 Sam. 15. 15. 2 Sam. 15. 7, 8. Prov. 7. 14, 15. Hoſ. 12. 8. 1 Reg. 21. 9. 4. It is alike prophaneſs to give ear to the wiſdome of the fleſh, againſt the duties of our calling, and to argue from inconveniences, which we fear to diſcourage our ſelves from thoſe labours which God hath promiſed to bleſs. God ſaith to encourage us unto duty, That his light ſhall ſhine on our waies, he will comfort and

bleſs

bleſs us in them, and his angel ſhall keep us in our waies, Pſ. 91. 11. but the ſluggard ſaith to diſcourage himſelf, There is a Lion in the way, Prov. 22. 13. as if Lions were more terrible to affright, than Angels to protect. 5. It is a vain conceit, to think contentment is tied unto a ſmall eſtate, and vexation to a greater; whereas true content knows as well how to abound, as how to want, Phil. 4. 11, 12. and diſcontent will make men as anxious, as froward, as impatient under a ſmall eſtate, as craving, hoarding, coveting under a greater, Prov. 30. 9. Pſ. 59. 15. The words of this verſe are proverbial, the former part, by the word *handful*, expreſſing a little eſtate; as Pſ. 72. 16. Ezek. 13. 19. The other, by *hands full*, a greater and more plentiful, gotten with all the ſtrength and labour of the whole man, Mic. 7. 3.

V. 7. *vanity under the Sun*] Another vanity, and quite contrary to the former; as fools when they avoid one extreme, fall into the other.

V. 8. *There is one alone*, &c.] One, (*i.e.*) one by himſelf; as Gen. 19. 9. and not a ſecond; that is, either no companion, or member in his family to provide for, or no heir to ſucceed him in his eſtate; none for whom he can ſay, It is this man for whom I labour. See v. 15. *neither*

neither child nor brother] His labour is not founded in any natural love of those for whom he is bound to provide, 1 Tim. 5. 8. Gen. 47. 12. Prov. 17. 17. but meerly on the inordinate love of riches themselves.

This covetous wretch is here described, 1. By his solitarines, he lives all alone, he cannot endure two mouths in a house.

2. By his excessive labour; there is no end of all his labour: He toyls infinitely, and without measure, Isa. 2. 7. Job. 22. 5. Some by labour, understand wealth gotten by labour. He hath a vast estate, and yet is as greedy as if he had nothing.

3. By his insatiable desires, *neither is his eye satisfied with riches*] He hath enough for his back, his belly, his calling, the decency of his state and condition, but he hath not enough for his eye. Though he can but see it, and have no use of it, yet he is displeased that he sees no more. The eye is the instrument of coveting, 1 Joh. 2. 16. Josh. 7. 21. Chap. 1. 8. & 2. 10. A covetous man, though he have as much as his eye can see, yet he would have more still, Isa. 5. 8. Hab. 2. 5. Prov. 30. 15. Job 40. 23, 24.

4. By his folly and inconsiderateness, he doth not weigh with himself the absurdity of his so living, he still goes out of himself in labour after riches, but never comes to himself, to reason

reaſon and argue the caſe, or to call himſelf to an account of his doings, Jer. 8. 6. Luke 15. 17. Pſ. 4. 5.

5. By his Inhumanity and ſelf-cruelty, denying thoſe comforts to himſelf, which God hath given him, uſing himſelf worſe than God would have the Oxe uſed in the Law, Deut. 25. 4. Treading out the corn, and yet muzling himſelf, Chap. 6. 2.

6. By the groundleſneſs of this cruelty, He hath none, while he lives, for whom he doth it, and when de dies, he leaves no heir, kinſman, ſecond to enjoy it, but undergoes all his toyl, and bereaves himſelf of all comfort, for he knows not whom, Pſ. 39. 6. The cenſure of all which is, that it is vanity, and a very ſore and grievous affliction.

V. 9. *Two are better than one*] Good more than one: ſo the comparative uſeth to be expreſſed; as Chap. 7. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8. Prov. 8. 11. Hag. 2. 10. upon occaſion of the ſolitary life of this miſer, he ſheweth the benefit of ſociety, and mutual helpfulneſs which thereby one man affordeth unto another, therefore God made woman for a companion and an helper unto man, Gen. 2. 18. and Chriſt ſent forth his Diſciples by Two and Two, Mar. 6. 7. Luke 10. 1. not only that they might be joyful witneſſes of the truth which they were to deliver, as Moſes

and

and Aaron, Joshua and Zorobbabel, in reference unto whom we read of, Two witnesses, Rev. 11. 3, 4, and in that respect the Apostle usually joyneth one or two more to himself in the inscription of his Epistles, as joynt witnesses of the truth of the doctrine therein delivered, 1 Cor. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 1. Phil. 1. 1. Coloss. 1. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 1. But withal, That they might with more ease and success carry on the ministery, wherein they were imployed, and help mutually to strengthen, to encourage, to comfort one the other.

because they have a good reward for their labour] Or, a Benefit mutually from each other in their labour, by counsel, by comfort, by assistance and co-operation, by supply of any want, or infirmity which may befall each other, 1 Sam. 23. 16, 17. 2 Cor. 8. 18, 19, 22. Act. 13. 2, 5. Prov. 27. 17. Act. 19. 29. Phil. 4. 3. They do both promote the common good, they do the more easily compass it, they do the more sweetly enjoy it. This mutual benefit is further opened in some particulars of mutual danger, mutual rest, and mutual defence.

V. 10. *If they fall,*] That is, if one or either of them fall, the plural is used distributively or partitively to either of the singulars: as, The wicked men they flye,

Prov.

Prov. 28. 1. *i. e.* every man. *She ſhall be ſaved, if they abide,* 1 Tim. 2. 15. *i. e.* if any of them abide. Falling, here, may be underſtood in all ſenſes, for corporal falls, into a pit, from a horſe or the like. Metaphorically, if they fall into diſeaſes, diſgraces, dangers. Spiritually, into ſins or errors. In any adverſities, The ſociety of friends is uſeful to pity, to reſtore, to ſupport, to convince, to comfort. Whereas ſuch a ſolitary worldling as he ſpake of before, is forſaken of all, and hath none to ſtand to him. This is ſometimes the lot of the godly in trouble, but then God ſtands by them, Pſ. 22. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17.

But woe to him that is alone] *Woe to him,* is in the Original, one word made of two; as is obſerved out of Kimchi. It is here an interjection of grieving, with a denouncing of ſome evil which is coming towards a man: It is once more uſed in this Book, Chap. 10. 16. and hardly at all elſewhere in that ſenſe. *Woe to him that is alone,* or, to him that One, when he falleth, and there is not a ſecond to lift him up.

V. 11. *Again, if two lye together, then they have heat,* &c.] This alſo may be underſtood not only literally, as 1 Reg. 1. 1, 2. but metaphorically for all kind of mutual aſſiſtance, and encouragement in any work which is to be

be done, Heb. 10. 24. Luke 24. 32.

V. 12. *And if one prevail againſt him*] *i.e.* Some ſtranger or third perſon aſſault, and be too hard for him, that is, for one of the two, then two or three ſhall ſtand againſt that One, and ſhall be eaſily able to reſiſt him. See 2 Sam. 10. 11. Jer. 41. 13, 14. Pſ. 127. 5. This is another benefit of ſociety and friendſhip, aid & protection againſt aſſaults, whether outward, or ſpiritual in Temptations from Satan. In all thoſe, and ſo proportionably in all other caſes, in war, in peace, in danger, in buſineſs, day and night, in the multitude of counſellors there is ſafety, Prov. 11. 14. & 14. 22. provided that this Society be undertaken in the fear of God, and in good and lawful things, otherwiſe, combinations in wickedneſs are curſed, Pſ. 64. 5, 6, 7. Pſ. 83. 3——9. Nahum 1. 10, 12. Prov. 11. 21.

two ſhall withſtand him] Or, ſtand before him with confidence and courage to help one another. Standing, is a military poſture, Epheſ. 6. 11, 13, 14. Pſ. 94. 16. Eſther 8. 11. Standing before one, as an enemie to deſtroy him, Rev. 12. 4. Hence that expreſſion of looking one another in the face, 2 Chron. 25. 17.

a threefold cord, or a triple twiſted threed, is not eaſily broken.] A Proverb ſetting forth the

the ſtrength and benefit of concord and ſociety.

V. 13. *Better is a poor and wiſe child*, &c.] From this verſe to the end of the Chapter, Solomon proceedeth to ſet forth the vanity of the Higheſt and moſt eminent condition amongſt men, namely, of Kingly dignity, which he ſheweth both in fooliſh and wilful Princes, who refuſe to be counſelled, and in all other, be they never ſo circumſpect. To manifeſt the former, he taketh firſt one of the moſt contemptible perſons one could think on, and compares him with one of the moſt honourable, a child to an aged man, a poor child to a potent King. Childhood is alone very contemptible, and expoſed to neglect and ſcorn; looked on as raſh, heady, unſtayed, without judgement or experience, Iſa. 3, 4, 5. 1 Reg. 3. 7. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Eph. 4. 14. 2 Chron. 13. 7. Hereunto poverty being added, will make ſuch an one much more neglected, Eccleſ. 9. 15. Jam. 2. 3, 6. Prov. 14. 20. 1 Tim. 5. 12. on the other ſide, old age alone is venerable, though but in an ordinary perſon, Lev. 19. 32. Iſa. 3. 2, 3. Gray hairs alone are a Crown, and beauty, Prov. 16. 31. how much more honourable, when they are joyned with a Crown; yet this poor child being wiſe, is preferred before that aged King being

being fooliſh and intractable; as Prov. 19. 1. The wiſdome of ſuch a child here, is his knowledge of God in his word, whereby a young man is inſtructed how to order his waies, as that of Timothy, 2 Tim. 3. 15. Pſ. 119. 99, 100. The fooliſhneſs of ſuch a Prince is, He knoweth not to be admoniſhed, He cannot counſel himſelf, and he will not be counſelled by others. So, not to know, doth import a fooliſh obſtinacy and impotency in the mind, a neglect of what is offered unto a man to conſider of, Iſa. 56. 11. & 7. 16. contrary to that which is called knowing, or conſidering in the heart, Deut. 8. 5. Prov. 29. 7.

Here we ſee, 1. That wiſdome makes the meaneſt perſon honourable, maketh the face ſhine, Chap. 8. 1.

2. That the fear of God teacheth children wiſdome, 2 Tim. 3. 15. 1 Sam. 16. 18. & 18. 5. Pſ. 119. 98, 100. Dan. 1. 20.

3. That intractableneſs of heart againſt counſel, is an evidence of folly. Solomon, though the wiſeſt of Princes, yet had a Counſel about him of aged and the moſt able men, whoſe counſel Rehoboam rejecting, ſhewed his weakneſs, 2 Chron. 10. 6. & 13. 17.

4 That old age, and power, without a corrective of wiſdome, are very likely to render men

men wilful, and opinionative, Job 32. 9.

V. 14. *For out of priſon he cometh to reign*] Out of the houſe of men bound, Judg. 16. 21. Gen. 40. 3, 7. Iſa. 14. 17. from the midſt of bonds and fetters. *He cometh*] Namely, the poor and the wiſe child: For theſe words are a confirmation of thoſe before, from the event which hapneth to both, The wiſdome of the child advanceth him from a priſon to a throne, from chains to a Crown. The obſtinacy and folly of the other, hurrieth him from power to poverty; from honour to contempt. *Out of priſon he cometh to reign i.e.* from the loweſt and moſt obſcure condition, Job 5. 11. Pſ. 113. 7, 8. Gen. 41. 14, 39——44. 2 Sam. 7. 8. Dan. 2. 25, 48. & 3. 26, 30. & 6. 3.

whereas alſo he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor] Or, *whereas he in his kingdom is born poor*, i. e. is made poor. So paſſing from one condition to another, is a kind of birth: but the other ſenſe is more emphatical, he who from his childhood was a King, and in actual poſſeſſion of his Throne, becometh poor, Pſ. 149. 8. Job 12. 19, 20, 21. 2 Chron. 33. 11. & 36. 3, 4, 6. 2 Reg. 25. 6, 7. Dan. 4. 30——33.

V. 15. *I conſidered all the living, which walk under the Sun, with the ſecond child that ſhall ſtand up in his ſtead*] Theſe two verſes

verſes ſet forth another vanity attending upon Kingly power, not for the fault of the perſon, but through the inconſtant and fickle diſpoſition of the people, who ever have, and ever will be given to changes, worſhip the riſing Sun, and grow weary of him who is likely ſooneſt to leave them.

all the living] That is, all the preſent generation of men living under a preſent Prince or Government. He ſpeaks of the generality of men, and therefore expreſſeth them under a general notion of living men, Job. 30. 23. Dan. 4. 17. And withal, to intimate a ground in them of what he here conſidered, when the father is going away, and the ſon ready to ſucceed, they think that they muſt live and be preſerved by the living, and not by the dead, and accordingly worſhip him under whom they expect protection and preſervation of life; for, for that end was Government inſtituted, 1. Tim. 2. 2.

which walk under the ſun] Elſewhere, *which ſee the ſun*, Chap. 7. 11. another expreſſion intimating this to be the popular humour of the generality of men, or the vulgar people, who go up and down the ſtreets; as the vulgar are diſtinguiſhed from the greater and nobler ſort, Jer. 5. 1, 4, 5. or walking may be joyned with the following words, *viz.*

with

with the ſecond child] I obſerve that the generality of people walk with the ſecond child, joyn themſelves unto him, and flatter and crouch to him, forſaking in their affections and behaviours the father, becauſe he is about to forſake them.

which ſhall ſtand up in his ſtead] Namely, in the fathers or predeceſſors ſtead. By ſtanding up, he meaneth, riſing to the Throne, Dan. 11. 2. they look on the predeceſſor as falling, ſinking, lying down, ſtooping towards the grave, and therefore apply themſelves to his heir. Whereby he noteth as the unhappineſs of Princes, who if they live long, live to ſee their glory dye before themſelves; ſo the fickleneſs of the generality of the people, who do not honour Rulers for their office ſake, as they ought to do; and eſpecially ſhould reverence it the more, by how much the more experience they have had of happineſs under it, Rom. 13. 1——5. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 15. but honour them meerly out of intereſt and ſelf-reſpect, not conſidering ſo much preſent duty, as future advantage. There is naturally in the minds of the people a wearineſs of being long under one Prince, a querulouſneſs and repining at every thing which pincheth them, and thereupon a deſire to change him for the next, not ſo much out of choice or aſſurance that he will be

be better, but out of natural levity and inconstancy; as sick men change beds, chambers, couches, but carry their disease with them, they love changes for the very change sake, 1 Sam. 8. 5, 18, 19, 20. and 12. 12, 13. 2 Sam. 15. 12. 1 Reg. 2. 15. 2 Sam. 20. 2. Prov. 14. 21.

V. 16. *There is no end of all the people*, &c.] By *all the people*, he meaneth the giddy and inconstant multitude, whose levity and discontent with their present estate, is the cause that they thus desire continual changes, and reject to day whom yesterday they adored. *There is no end of all the people*, or *to all the people*] There are infinite numbers of people in every age and generation who stand thus affected: it is not a contingent or unusual thing, but very common. It is not a vanity which Princes have experience of only sometimes, as in some few persons; but it is the general disease of the vulgar, to stand thus variously affected towards their Princes in all ages. So this phrase, *There is no end*, is used to express a great or infinite number, Isa. 2. 7. *supra*, vers. 8. Job 22. 5. Nahum. 3. 3. Again, *There is no end to all the people*] The people never put an end or a stop to this vanity, but it passeth on, from one generation to another. They which went before did so, so do these now, and so will they do which follow. 3. By no

no end, may be meant no ſatisfaction to deſires, no through and fixed acquieſcency of heart in the people towards their Princes, they will ſtill entertain expectations of new men, and new events to ſatisfie their deſires. So the word *End*, is uſed for that wherein the heart may acquieſce, and look no further for ſomething elſe, Prov. 23. 18. They do not terminate and fix their affections in one man, be he never ſo wiſe or worthy, but grow weary of him, and joyn themſelves unto his Succeſſor.

even of all thoſe that have been before them] Namely, before the father and the ſon, or ſucceſſor which was ſecond unto him. The word [*before*] may ſignifie either in the preſence of them, *i. e.* who have been officers under them, or done ſervice, and born allegiance to them, 2 Sam. 16. 19. 1 Reg. 10. 8. or elſe an antecedence in time unto them. They who were before them, did thus languiſh in their affections to the father, and apply themſelves unto the ſon.

They alſo that come after ſhall not rejoice in him] *i. e.* In the ſon, unto whom now they ſeem ſo zealouſly, and with ſo much loyalty to joyn themſelves.

not rejoyce] That is, they will be weary of him, troubled with him, wiſh themſelves freed from him. The verb negative

by a μείωσις, ſeems to import the Affirmative contrary unto it, as is uſual in Scripture, Exod. 20. 7. Prov. 17. 21. Zach. 8. 17. Rom. 4. 19. This then is Hereditary to all people, There is no End of it, they can never be ſetled or contented with the preſent eſtate, as they before did diſlike the father in expectation of the ſon, ſo they after will caſt off the ſon in expectation of the grandchild, and ſo it will be in all generations.

This is vanity and vexation of ſpirit] This muſt needs be matter of indignation & grief to Princes, to ſee ſo much falſeneſs and inconſtancy in their people, to ſee their Honour grow old & decrepit with their bodies.

CHAP. V.

THe Wiſe man having ſpoken of the vanity which attendeth on the very higheſt condition of men here below; ſeems here to make a kind of digreſſion, and to go yet higher unto the conſideration of that which principally concerns man in this Life, to wit, The worſhip of God. This is the ſupreme Remedy of all the other Vanities, and may ſeem here to be ſubjoyned (as alſo it is in the end of the Book) to that purpoſe, to ſhew, that though neither knowledge, nor plea-

pleaſures, nor honours, nor crowns can make men happy, though it be beyond the ſphere and activity of any Creature to adminiſter compleat tranquility to the heart of a man, yet even in this life a man may be happy by worſhipping of God, and Communion with him. As if he ſhould have ſaid, We have gone through the World, and ſought high there for ſatisfaction, as ever any man could arrive, even to Crowns and Thrones, and yet have miſſed of it. It remains therefore that we go higher yet, before we can be truly happy, and that is from the World to the Sanctuary; from the Thrones of Princes, to the Thrones of Grace; from the Creature, to God, In whoſe ſervice alone there is compleat felicity.

But beſides this I take it, the ſcope of the wiſe man is, by way of Prolepſis or anſwer to a tacite objection, to diſcover yet a higher and a ſtranger vanity than any he had ſpoken of before, namely vanity in the worſhip of God, not as it is in it ſelf, but as it is performed by vain & fooliſh men. They might ſay, we do eaſily agree with you in all that you have ſaid, we know we muſt look above the Creatures, if ever we intend to arrive at true Happineſs. Therefore what pains ſoever we take about things under the Sun, yet we ſeek for our Happineſs no

where but in God, and in his ſervice. Solomon now, acknowledging the truth of this in the Theſis, That the Worſhip of God is the true felicity of man in this life, doth withall aſſure theſe men, that they may put vanity in the very Worſhip of God, and render that by their fooliſh and carnal performance wholly unprofitable to any ſuch end, yea there may be therein divers vanities, verſ. 7. for diſcovery and avoiding whereof he preſcribeth a ſolemn caveat to thoſe, who being convinced of vanity in the Creatures do go to God in his Worſhip to mend themſelves.

This is, 1. General, relating to all parts of Gods Worſhip, which is in our Approaches unto God, to look to our affections, and to prepare our hearts to meet with him, not reſting in outward ſacrifices, which are but the oblations of fools, who think they do well, when in truth they do the contrary, verſ. 1.

2. Particular, in ſome ſpecies of worſhip:

1. In Hearing, which he ſaith muſt be done with Readineſs, with a docile and tractable ſpirit, yielding up it ſelf to the whole counſel of God, verſ. 1.

2. In Prayer and ſpeaking unto God, where is firſt condemned a double Vanity,

Raſh-

Raſhneſſe of tongue, Haſtineſſe of heart, both enforced by conſideration of Gods Greatneſſe, and of our own Vileneſſe, verſ. 2. Secondly, preſcribed fewneſs of words, without vain and unneceſſary babling, and that becauſe of Gods Majeſty, and the folly of ſo doing, verſ. 3.

3. In Vowes, which being once made, are to be performed, and that cheerfully, without grudging or delay; which doctrine he doth, 1. prove, 2. vindicate from ſhiftings and excuſes. He proveth it, 1. By the the folly of the contrary courſe, it argues a levity of ſpirit to dally, and to be off and on with God, who as he is conſtant himſelf in all his Promiſes, ſo he expecteth conſtancy from us in all ours. 2. By Gods diſlike of ſuch folly and falſeneſs, verſ. 4.

Next he vindicateth it from a double excuſe which men are apt to make:

1. It was free for me to vow; the thing was in mine own power, therefore it is not ſo hainous a thing though I do fail, becauſe I was not bound to what I vowed till I had vowed it. This he anſwereth, That it had been better to have kept this Liberty ſtill, and not to have vowed, then after vowes to reſume Liberty when it is too late, verſ. 5.

2. But I was miſtaken, there was an Errour in my Vow. To this he gives a double

anſwer, and ſets it on with weighty conſiderations: Firſt, Look well before thou vow, that thou do not bring a bond of ſin upon thy ſelf: *Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thee to ſin.* Secondly, Take heed of pretending errour and overſight, out of unwillingneſſe to do what thou haſt promiſed: *Say not that it was an errour.* For conſider, 1. Thou art in the preſence of the Angel. 2. Thou provokeſt Gods anger. 3. The damage which by that anger thou wilt ſuffer, he will *deſtroy the work of thy hands*, diſappoint thee in that benefit, the preſervation whereof thou didſt aym at in excuſing thy Vow. 4. The folly of ſuch vain excuſes. There is a vanity in all parts of Worſhip when undertaken by fools or wicked men: the fools ſacrifice, verſ. 1. the fooles voyce, verſ. 3. the fooles vow, verſ. 4. Divers vanities in all this, verſ. 7.

Now having ſhewed the vanities in the carnal performance of Divine Worſhip, he doth (as he had done formerly in the other Vanities which he ſpake of before) preſcribe a Remedy of this alſo, *viz.* The inward principle of all Right and ſpiritual Worſhip which is to fear God, verſ. 7.

And becauſe it might be objected, That Piety it ſelf is not likely to ſecure a man's tranquility and peace, in as much as we find poor

poor and righteous men every where, all a Province over, oppressed and persecuted by great men in high place: he removeth this objection, 1. By shewing the compassion of God and his Justice, He sees and regards it. 2. The greatnesse and power of God, that he is higher then any of those that oppresse his servants, vers. 8.

Now he proceedeth to another Vanity, which is in Riches and outward possessions. They are of two sorts;

1. Substantial and Real wealth, in the profits and Fruits of the Earth, Corn, Cattel, &c.

2. Instrumental, in that which is by mens agreement made a measure to other wealth, *viz.* silver and gold. Concerning both which he sheweth, 1. The excellency of the former, in regard of real and general profit, before the later, verse 9. 2. The vanity both of the one and the other, when 1. inordinately loved. 2. Immoderately increased.

This vanity is shewed, 1. Absolutely, in that the Inordinate love of them is unsatisfiable, vers. 10. and that troubles and cares are proportionably increased in the Increase of them, vers. 11.

2. Comparatively, and that 1. in respect of any Real benefit and good in the fruition

of them. The owner hath no more true profit by them, (further then that he looks on them as his own) then any of his friends and servants, who are fed and cloathed by them as well as he: onely his cares are increased. 2. In respect of consequent rest and quietness, the servants heart is lesse troubled, his body more refreshed then the owners, vers. 12. 3. In regard of the evill effects of Riches:

1. The damage and hurt which sometimes a man layes up with them against himself, vers. 13.

2. The uncertainty of their abode with a man, having hurt the owners, they perish themselves, vers. 14.

3. The certainty of parting with them, They must dye, they cannot carry one handful away with them, vers. 15, 16.

4. The sordid and uncomfortable use of them, vers. 17.

5. Impatiency and fretfulnesse in parting with them, or in getting of them, vers. 17.

Lastly, he gives the Remedy of this Vanity and Vexation, in the right use of Riches, *viz.* In a free and cheerful enjoyment of them: which is here commended,

1. By its goodness to the owners.

2. By

2. By its comelineſſe and commendableneſſe towards others.

3. By its Equity, It is the fruit of a mans *Own Labour*, and provided for his *Own Life*.

4. The End of it, and his Right to it, It is *His Portion*, all that he is ever like to get by it, verſ. 18.

5. The Author of it, it is a ſpecial gift of God, 1. To give Riches. 2. To give an heart to enjoy them, verſ. 19.

6. Freedome hereby from the trouble of all his Labours, when himſelf taſtes the fruit of them, and hath experience of Gods ſpecial bleſſing, in anſwering the deſires of his heart, and cauſing him comfortably to enjoy them, verſ. 20.

Verſ. 1. *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of God*] He had gone up and down the World, from Learning to Pleaſures, from Pleaſures to Honours, from Honours to Thrones, to find out Happineſſe, and had met with nothing but Vanity. Now he ſends us to a fitter place to find it, *The Houſe of God*, whether his Temple, or other Synagogues, where God is preſent to thoſe that ſerve him, here they ſhall find remedies againſt the vanity of other things, and that which will ſtay and fix their

hearts, Pſal. 73. 16, 17. Pſal. 4. 6, 7. Onely we muſt take heed of putting vanity into Gods Worſhip, leſt we be there diſappointed of our ayms, as well as elſewhere. This Caveat he gives us in thoſe words, *Keep thy foot*] or, each foot. The letters are plural, the points direct to read it in the ſingular number. So *foot*, for *feet*, Pſal. 119. 105. This Enallage of numbers is very uſual, the ſingular for the plural; as Pſal. 14. 1. *The fool hath ſaid*, &c. They, *i.e.* fools are corrupt. *In that day a man ſhall caſt away his idols which they have made*, Eſay 2. 20.

Keep thy foot] Seriouſly adviſe how thou art to behave thy ſelf in Gods preſence, look to thy heart and affections, let thy heart be fixed, thy affections compoſed, thy thoughts ordered, call all that is within thee together to ſerve him, Pſal. 57. 7. & 103. 1. A Metaphor from men that walk in dangerous ways, who take heed to their ſteps leſt they ſtumble and fall: Or rather an alluſion to the ſpeech of God to Moſes, Exod. 3. 5. So Exod. 19. 21. Joſh. 5. 15. As Mephiboſheth dreſſed his feet, when he went to David, 2 Sam. 19. 24. So they uſed waſhings, and purifyings before they came into Gods preſence, Exod. 19. 14 15. Num. 8. 7. Pſal. 26. 6. Heb. 10. 22. Lev. 19. 30. & 16. 2, 3. Gen. 28. 16, 17. Exod. 40. 32.

and

and be more ready to hear, then to offer the ſacrifice of fools] Or, Draw near to hear, rather then with, or as fools, to offer a ſacrifice, who think to be accepted for their outward work. The Infinitive uſed for the Imperative, as Exod. 20. 8. Matth. 5. 39. Luk. 22. 42. or we may read it in the Infinitive, thus, *for to draw near to hear, i. e.* to bring before God an obedient heart, is better then when fools do give a ſacrifice. Or, then to give a ſacrifice of fools. He doth not forbid or condemn ſacrifices, but he preferreth obedience, and ſheweth the vanity and folly of thoſe, who are very forward in the outward acts of Religion, without the love and ſervice of the heart, 1 Sam 15. 22. Hoſ. 6. 6. Iſa. 1. 11——18. Amos 5. 21, 22, 23, 24. Pſal. 50. 17. & 51. 16, 17. Iſa. 66. 2, 3. Prov. 15. 8, 21, 27.

be more ready] The word is, *Draw near to Hear.* It is a word very frequently uſed in Scripture, to expreſs our addreſſing our ſelves unto the ſolemn Service and Worſhip of God, Lev. 1. 9. 1 Sam. 14. 36. 2 Reg. 16. 12. Pſal. 73. 28. Iſa. 58. 2. Ezek. 44. 15, 16. Matth. 15. 8. whereunto there is a frequent alluſion in the New Teſtament, Epheſ. 2. 18. Heb. 4. 16. & 7. 25. & 10. 1, 22. & 11. 6. It importeth a ſerious compoſing of our hearts, in an humble, reverend, and holy manner

ner to appear before God, and to have a comfortable acceſſe unto the Throne of grace, Lev.10.3. Heb.12.28,29.

to hear] Whereas there are two parts of Worſhip, ſacrifice and obedience, be thou moſt careful of this, which is the ſpiritual and inward part of ſervice, rather then of that which fools, hypocrites, wicked men can offer as well as thou. Be ready to receive Inſtruction, and to accept of what God ſayes, Pſal.85.8. Job 34.32. 1 Sam.3.10. Act.9.6. & 10.33. Jam.1,19. Be ready to obey and give up thy will to every one of Gods holy Commandements, Pſal.119.128.

then to offer the ſacrifice of fools] Then as fools, (*i.e.*) wicked men do, to offer up ſacrifice, and neglect obedience, Mich. 6.6,7,8.

for they conſider not, know not, that they do evil.] Some would have the word, *But*, to be ſupplyed, *They know not but to do evil*: They can onely do evil, even when they worſhip God; as Iſa.1.6. See Chap.2.24. Others thus, *non attendunt ad facere malum*, or *ad factionem mali*: which is to the ſenſe of our Verſion. They are here called *fools*, and that is further expreſſed, by want of knowledge: *They know not*, and that doth further appear by doing of evil, Iſa. 1.3,4. Jer.8.9. The moſt natural ſenſe is, as we render

render it, *They know not that they do evil*: when they do evil, they conſider it not, they underſtand it not; the like phraſe, 1 Joh.2. 6,9. ὁ λέγων μένειν, ὁ λέγων ἐν τῷ φωτὶ εἶναι. *He that ſaith to abide, (i.) that he abideth. He that ſaith to be in the light, (i.) that he is in the light.* So here, *They know not to do evil, (i.)* that they are doing of evil. And hereby is meant by an Auxeſis, they think they do very good ſervice; So when the Lord is ſaid not to command a thing, the meaning is, that he doth forbid it, Lev.10.1. *He will not hold them guiltleſs that take his Name in vain, (i.)* he will hold them very guilty, Exod.20.7. *He will withhold no good thing from them that walk upright, (i.)* He will largely ſupply them, Pſal. 84. 12. *He will not break a bruized reed, (i.)* he will bind them up and ſtrengthen them, Iſa.42.3. Abraham was not weak in faith, *(i.)* he was ſtrong, Rom.4.19. Men may think they do God good ſervice, when they do greatly offend him, Iſa.66.5. Prov.14.12. Iſa.58.2, 3. Hoſ.8.2,3. Joh.16.2. Act.26.9.

Theſe things are here obſervable;

1. That in Gods Worſhip we do in a ſpeciall manner draw nigh unto him.

2. That when we do ſo, we ought to prepare and compoſe our hearts and affections by

by faith and humility to appear before God.

3. That a prepared heart brings purposes of obedience, and to hear God in all that he shall say unto it.

4. That mere outward service without the heart prepared obediently to serve the Lord, is but a sacrifice of Fools, a mere formal and ceremonial worship.

5. That Hypocrites may think they please God, when indeed they provoke him, and know not that they do evil, Joh. 4. 22.

V. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth*] Having spoken in general of the due preparation of the heart unto Gods service, he now giveth direction in the particulars of prayer and vowes.

Be not rash] Go not about Gods Worship as men that in a fright or terrour being amazed, flye hastily they know not whither. Do not precipitate thy words, nor speak any thing hastily, unadvisedly, according to the dictate of carnal and hasty desires before God, or in his house and presence. We know not what to ask as we ought, Rom. 8. 26. and are very apt to put our own greedy and sudden passions into prayers, complaints, deprecations, to think God deals not well with us if we be not answered according to our

our wills, and in our own time, Pſal. 31.22. & 116.11. Job 10.2,3,18. Jer.15.18. Jon. 4.2,3. Matth. 20.20,21. Pſal. 77.7—10.

and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God] Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh, Matth.12.34. Therefore the remedy of raſhneſs in our words, is to compoſe our thoughts and affections aright; to let our heart guide our tongue, not to bring raw, tumultuary, indigeſted thoughts into Gods preſence, but to get a collected heart, to pray with underſtanding, with ſpirit, with judgment, and according to Gods Will; as David found his heart to pray to God, 2 Sam. 7. 27. and call'd together his ſcattered affections, that he might fix them upon God, Pſal. 103. 1. Dan.9.2,3. Rom.8.26,27. 1 Cor. 14. 15. 1 Joh.5.14.

We may likewiſe underſtand the Caveat, as directed againſt that carnal pride and contradiction of ſpirit, whereby the heart is apt to riſe againſt God and his Word, when we hear of more ſpiritual ſervice required by God, then our fooliſh ſacrifices do amount unto, or our carnal hearts are able to perform, Jam.1.19,20. Rom.10.21. Acts 13.45. & 28.19.

befor

before the Lord] That is, in his Houſe or Sanctuary. Therefore they who ſin here, are ſaid to provoke the Lord to his very face, and to do evil before his eys, Iſa. 65. 3. & 66. 3, 4.

for God is in heaven, and thou on the earth] Theſe are two Arguments to enforce this Caveat upon us; the one drawn from Gods greatneſs, the other from our vileneſſe. Mean perſons behave themſelves with all honour & reverence, when they ſupplicate unto men of honour and eminency. Much more ſhould men do ſo unto God. So Chriſt teacheth us in prayer to come unto God, as with confidence and comfort, becauſe he is a Father; ſo with reverence and fear, becauſe he is a Father in Heaven, Matth. 6. 9.

His being in Heaven denotes, 1. His dominion over us as Lord and Maſter, Eph. 6. 9.

2. His glory and majeſty above us, 1 Reg. 8. 27. that we might learn to fear before him, Mal. 1. 6. Deut. 28. 58. Heb. 12. 18, 29.

3. His holineſſe and purity, Deut. 26. 15. Iſal. 57. 15. & 63. 15. Hereby to raiſe us unto heavenly mindedneſſe in our approaches unto him, Col. 3. 1, 2. Lam. 3. 40, 41.

4. His power to anſwer us, and to do for us according to our deſires, 2 Chron. 20. 6, 7. Pſal. 115. 3. Matth. 5. 45. & 7. 11.

5. His omniſcience, he looketh down on us, and ſeeth how we behave our ſelves in

his

his preſence, Matth.6.32. Pſal.11.4. & 33. 13,14.

6. His juſtice and diſpleaſure againſt evil doers, Pſal.14.2,3. Rom.1.18. In all which reſpects, we ought to take heed of all haſty, raſh, and unadviſed frame of heart in Gods preſence. Mans being on earth, ſignifieth his baſeneſs and vile condition, his great diſtance from God, and by reaſon of corruption, his great diſſimilitude unto him. He is of the earth earthly, 1 Cor. 15. 47. Pſal. 10.18. This conſideration of our natural and ſinful vileneſs, ſhould greatly humble us in our approaches unto God, Job 4. 19,25. & 4.5,6. & 40.4. Gen.18.17. Iſa.6.5.

therefore let thy words be few] Firſt, uſe not raſh and vain babling, and empty, heartleſs repetitions as the heathen, Mat.6.7. but weigh and chooſe out words to ſpeak unto him, Job 9.14. Eccleſ.12.10. He ſpeaketh not againſt all length in prayer; for Chriſt prayed whole nights: nor againſt all repetition, when it proceedeth from zeal, love, and holy fervency; as that of Daniel, Ch.9. 16,18,19. but of that which is a clamorous and vain ingeminating of the ſame thing without faith or wiſdom, 1 Reg.18.26. Secondly, *let thy words be few*, (*i. e.*) Let not thy vowes be more then thou mayeſt comfortably perform.

V. 3.

V. 3. *For a dream cometh through the multitude of buſineſſe, and a fools voice is known by multitude of words*] (*i. e.*) As multitude of buſineſs produceth dreams, ſo multitude of words diſcovereth folly. When two ſentences are connected together by a Copula, there is frequently imported a ſimilitude between them, Prov. 17. 3. & 25. 23, 25, 26, 27. & 26. 3, 7, 9, 11, 14, 17, 20, 21. Iſa. 53. 7. Another Argument moving unto the former duty, becauſe, as certainly as much buſineſs produceth dreams, ſo much ſpeech diſcovereth folly within, Prov. 10. 19. Eccleſ. 10. 11—14. Jam. 3. 2.

V. 4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it*] He giveth direction in the other particular, wherein men uſe to addreſs themſelves unto God, viz. *Vowes*: And as he did in the former forbid raſh haſtineſs, ſo he doth in this, warn to take heed of grudging delayes. A vow is a ſolemn promiſe, or permiſſory oath made unto God, wherein a man doth voluntarily binde himſelf unto ſomething, which was in his own power to binde himſelf unto. He doth not direct us here to make ſuch a vow, but having made it, to take heed of breaking faith and promiſe with God, who never fails in any promiſe of his unto us, Joſh. 21. 45. nor delayeth to perform it in its time, Exod. 12. 41,

41,51. Heb. 2. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 9. This then is the firſt Rule concerning vowes, That lawful vowes muſt be ſpeedily and cheerfully performed, Pſal. 66. 13, 14. & 76. 11. Numb. 30. 2. Deut. 13. 21. Iſai. 19. 21. Matth. 5. 33. God would not have an alteration in a vow, though it were for the better, Lev. 27. 10. Thus Hanna made haſte to perform her vow in dedicating her child unto God, as ſoon as he was weaned, 1 Sam. 1. 11, 24, 28. God calls on Jacob, and minds him of his vow made before, and expected that he ſhould go to Bethel, and pay it as he had promiſed, Gen. 35. 1. compared with Gen. 28. 20, 22.

for he hath no pleaſure in fools] He is greatly diſpleaſed with thoſe, who go about one while to flatter him in making a vow, and afterwards to mock him in refuſing or delaying to perform it, Prov. 20. 25. This is one reaſon, drawn from the folly in offending God; whereunto there is another adjoyned.

V. 5. *Better it is that thou ſhouldeſt not vow, then that thou ſhouldeſt vow and not pay*] It was arbitrary, and in our own power to make the vow, for vowes were to be of things in a mans power, Numb. 30. 3——15. Deut. 23. 22. Acts 5. 4. But it is not in our power whether, being made, we will pay it or no,

for

for we bring a bond upon our ſouls, and the vowes of God will be upon us, Pſal. 56. 12.

V. 6. Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin] Theſe words contain the ſecond Rule concerning Vowes, which is to teach us to avoid all raſh Vowes which are unadviſedly made, and that is done two wayes;

1. When we vow things ſinful, when our mouth cauſeth us to ſin,

2. When in lawful things we vow, and preſently repent, ſeeking after ſhifts and evaſions to elude the obligation, and to excuſe our ſelves. *Suffer not thy mouth*, by making an haſty vow, *to cauſe thy fleſh*] That is, thy tongue, or thy ſelf to ſin. Fleſh is taken by a Synecdoche, for the whole man, Gen. 6. 12. Iſai. 40. 5. Rom. 3. 20. It may ſeem here to be uſed for the whole man, to intimate, that raſh vowes are uſually grounded upon fleſhly, rather then ſpiritual reaſons. A man did not go about them with his ſoul and ſpirit, upon ſolemn and ſerious grounds, but to gratifie himſelf in ſome carnal intereſt or other, or to carry on ſome ſinful end, Acts 23. 12, 13. Mal. 1. 14. 2 Sam. 15. 8, 9. Prov. 7. 14. A like expreſſion, Eccl. 11. 10.

neither ſay thou before the Angel] By the Angel ſome do underſtand the Prieſt, or Meſſen-

Meſſenger of the Lord towards the people; ſo they are called, Job 33. 23. Mal. 2. 7. Rev. 1. 20. for in the caſe of an Oath, wherein there was errour or ignorance, the perſon was to bring a ſacrifice, and the Prieſt was to make an atonement for him, Lev. 5. 4, 5, 6. And then the meaning is, Do not when thou haſt vowed, repent and grudge, and go to the Prieſt, acknowledging an errour or ignorance, that ſo thou mayeſt ſave charges, and lick thy ſelf whole, by offering a ſacrifice to excuſe a vow. Others, underſtand the Angels of heaven, who are ſent forth for the good of the Elect, and who obſerve our behaviour in Gods Worſhip; as that in the Apoſtle uſeth to be underſtood, 1 Cor. 11. 10. Matth. 18. 10. Luk. 12. 8. 1 Tim. 5. 21. the Greek reads it, ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. Before God; it may haply be meant of the Temple or Houſe of God, where they did pay their vowes, Pſal. 66. 13. wherein there were Cherubims drawn, in token of the preſence of the Angels, and their protection to the Church, 1 Reg. 6. 29, 32. Others, underſtand it of Chriſt, who is the ſearcher of hearts, and will not be mocked, cannot be deceived; who is the Angel of the Covenant, and who is in the midſt of his people, his Candleſticks, when they come to Worſhip, Exod. 23. 20, 21. called the preſence

of

of God, Exod. 33. 14. Mal. 3. 1. Isa. 63. 9. Josh. 12. 41. It seemeth to me to have some allusion to the history of Balaam, who when the Angel stood in the way against him, made such an excuse as this, It was an errour, I knew not that thou stoodst against me, if it displease thee, I will go back, Numb. 22. 34.

That it was an errour] That is, either do not vow so rashly and unadvisedly, as to be at last brought to a necessity of confessing a sinfull errour, but advise before hand that thou maiest not erre. Such a rash vow was that of Jephthah, Judg, 11. 30, 31, 35. and that other of Saul, 1 Sam. 14. 24, 29, 39, 40. Or else, do not excuse thy self for breaking thy vow, by saying, thou didst it imprudently, and wert mistaken in it, it was an ignorance which thou art willing, by some sacrifice, or other way of devotion to expiate; as sacrifices were to be offered for the ignorances of the people, Levit. 2. 27. Numb. 15. 24, 25. Heb. 9. 7. Do not cover a wilfull prevarication with a specious pretence, nor after vowes make enquiry, Prov. 20. 25.

wherefore should God be angry at thy voice] The word signifies foaming anger; why should he through anger foam against thee? An interrogation of dehorting. As, Why will

ye

ye dye, (*i.e.*) Be careful that you may not dye. This is one reaſon, God will be angry. Another, Thou ſhall feel his anger, he will deſtroy the Work of thy hand. He will not bleſſe thoſe endeavours, for the accompliſhing whereof thou didſt make that vow; thou deſtroyeſt the vow, he will deſtroy thy work, Deut. 28. 15, &c. The third follows.

V. 7. *For in the multitude of dreams, and many words, there are many vanities: but fear thou God*] Or, In multitude of dreams, there are alſo vanities: and ſo in many words. Or, as in multitude of dreams, ſo alſo of words there are divers vanities. Some take ברב not for a Noun, but for the Infinitive mood of the Verb, & render it thus, *Quia ſicut in multiplicare*, or, *quando multiplicantur ſomnia, etiam vanitates multiplicantur: ſic ſe habent verba multa.* As when dreams are multiplied, vanities alſo are multiplied, ſo is it in many words. In all, the ſenſe is the ſame. *Mercer*, a moſt learned Interpreter, makes the connexion & ſenſe to be thus, I have given thee theſe cautions to be tender of thy behaviour in the preſence of God, that thou maieſt not by dreams, fancies, vanities, or multitude of difficult buſineſſes, be brought to utter any thing raſhly before God, but amidſt all dangers or dreams, or vanities, or difficulties, to fear God, and not to

ſuffer

fer thy ſelf to be withdrawn from him by any temptations. But the words ſeem to preſcribe the ſame remedy againſt raſh vowes, as before againſt other haſty addreſſes unto God, verſ. 3. There is a πολυσωμ δετον in the conjunction copulative, as elſewhere, Gen. 43. 8. &. 25. 34. The plural & *vanitates*, is as much, as *plurima vanitas*, great vanity, or many vanities; as Prov. 1. 20. Wiſdoms, (*i.*) principal or excellent wiſdom, Iſa. 64. 6. Our righteouſneſſes, (*i.*) moſt righteous action, Gen. 19. 11. Blindneſſes, (*i.*) Thick and through blindneſſe: Pſal. 45. 15. With gladneſſes, (*i.*) with great gladneſs: 2 Pet. 3. 11. *What manner of perſons ought we to be in holy converſations and godlineſſes*, (*i.*) In all manner of holy converſation and godlineſs: Cant. 5. 16. His palate is ſweetneſſes, and he is altogether, or every whit of him is deſires, (*i.*) Moſt ſweet, and moſt deſirable: Dan. 9. 23. A man of deſires, (*i.*) Greatly deſired or beloved: Iſai. 53. 3. A man of ſorrows, (*i.*) Full of ſorrows.

but fear thou God] This is the remedy of all vanities in Worſhip, to ſerve God rather with inward reverence and fear, then with raſh, haſty, many, formal, empty expreſſions. The fear of God is the foundation of all holy duties, Chap. 12. 13. Iſa. 29. 13. Deut. 28.

28. 58. Mal. 1. 6. Heb. 12. 28, 29.

V. 8. *If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and violent*, &c.] The connexion of theſe words with the former, ſtands thus: The fear of God doth many times expoſe men unto injury and violence, and that every where, all a Province and Country over, and that not onely from ordinary perſons, but from great men, and that without remedy; becauſe, if haply they have recourſe unto judgment and juſtice for eaſe, even they finde wreſting, perverting, diſtorting of juſtice: So that a mans tranquility in this life, may ſeem to be but little mended by Piety and fear of God, whereby he is in danger of being reduced to poverty and diſtreſs. This is a ſtumbling-block, which may cauſe men to be offended at the waies of God, Matth. 11. 5, 6. & 13. 21. Gal. 5. 11. and good men have ſtumbled at it, Pſal. 73. 12, 13. Againſt this temptation, he here ſubjoyns a ſeaſonable antidote, they ſhould not be much amazed at it, but rather comfort themſelves, that there lyeth an appeal to a higher Court, where they ſhall certainly be righted, and their innocency vindicated. If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor; and that ſuch oppreſſion, as that thou haſt no remedy againſt it, but it is powerful enough to wry and pervert judgment: And yet further, no eſcape

from it, but it meets with thee all the Nation or Province over. If you see a poor man that fears God, not onely suffer under the meanness of his condition, but under fraud, calumny, rapine, violence, where ever he goes; as Ezek. 18.12,18. Job 20,19. Mic. 3.2. Job 24.2—12. & 19.7,8. Psal. 74.20. Jer. 6.6,7. & 20,8. Ezek. 8,17.

marvel not at the matter] Be not amazed or astonished at it: so much the word imports, Isa. 13.8. Job 26. 11. Think it not a strange thing, 1 Pet. 4. 12 Do not think hardly of God, nor distrust his Providence, or grow weary of his service. What wonder at all is it to see power crush poverty; or wickedness suppress Piety? Psal. 37.8,9.

at the matter] Or, at the will, or purpose, to wit, of God, in suffering, and ordering this thing: for these things happen not without his appointment and providence, Hab. 1. 12. Isa. 10.5. Psal. 17.13.

for he that is higher then the highest regardeth, and there be higher then they] Higher, *viz.* God, who is higher: the relative without the antecedent, which is very usual: or, The High from above; The High regardeth it. It seemeth to be a vehement and emphatical Anadiplosis: the same word is used for from above, Gen. 27.39. & 49. 25. This kind of elegant and emphatical repetition

tion is frequent in the Scripture, Pſal. 22. 1. Jer. 7. 4. & 22. 29. Ezek. 21. 27. 2 Sam. 18. 33. 1 Reg. 18. 39. Judg. 5. 30. Pſal. 98. 4, 5, 6. & 124. 1, 2. Hoſ. 2. 2. Dan. 10. 19. And according to this ſenſe, God is ſaid in a way of Judgment to look down from heaven upon the violence of great men, and to ſpeak from thence in his wrath unto them, Pſal. 2. 4, 5. & 11. 4, 5, 6. Exod. 2. 23, 24. 1 Sam. 9. 16. Pſal. 93. 4. Or, *He that is higher then the High*, God, who is the High above all the Earth, the High and Mighty One, above the Potentates of the World, who are called High ones, Iſa. 24. 21. Iſa. 2. 11, 12. 2 Sam. 23. 1. He that is King of kings, and Lord of lords, *Higher then the Kings of the earth*, Pſal. 89. 27.

regardeth] Obſerveth the violence of proud men to avenge it. Or keepeth the poor who are oppreſſed by them, Iſa. 3. 14. Prov. 22, 22, 23. Pſal. 10. 12——18. & 11. 5. & 68. 5. & 72. 14.

and there be higher then they] Namely, The Holy Angels, who are ſent forth for the good of the Church, Heb. 1. 14. who pitch their tents about believers, and are Guardians over them, Pſal. 34. 7. & 91. 11. who behold the face of God as Miniſters ready to execute his commands in behalf of them, Matth. 18. 10. whoſe ſervice God is pleaſed to uſe

in the punishment of Tyrants, and subversion of States, Isa. 37. 36. Act. 12. 23.

V. 9. *Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all*] Here he returneth to consider the vanity of all kind of Riches; amongst which, though some are to be preferred before others, as namely corn and cattel, which are the profits of the earth, yet both the one and the other are unable to make the possessors of them happy. Yet withall, the words may seem to have some relation to what went before, namely, That God in his providence hath so ordered things in the civil body, That *the Head cannot say to the Foot, I have no need of thee*: the King himself wanteth the help, and cannot subsist without the labour of poor men, and that may be a check unto oppression and violence.

the profit of the earth is for all] Or, *above all other profit*. He commendeth husbandry, consisting in tillage and grazing, above all other wayes of gain, as extending to the necessary supply of all men whatsoever; *for bread is the staffe of life*, Isa. 3. 1. Gen. 41. 55. Prov. 24. 27. & 27. 23, 24. & 31. 16. Adam even in Innocency was to have dressed the earth, Gen. 2. 15. There is an excellency or profit of the earth, in, or above all. The substantive is put for an adjective of the superlative degree; as Gen. 12. 2. Psal. 21. 7. & 88. 9. Cant. 5. 16. the

the King himſelf is ſerved by the field] Or, the King himſelf is for the field: or the King is ſerved for the fields ſake, that under him men may quietly labour and eat the fruits of the earth: or the King himſelf dreſſeth his field, is as it were a ſervant to his field to order and husband it. It lyes on him to take care of husbandry, that he and his people may be nouriſhed. The moſt ſimple meaning is to ſhew, that from the meaneſt to the greateſt, the fruits of the earth are neceſſary for every mans ſupportance. Therefore Joſeph reſerved the fifth of the fruits of the Earth for Pharaoh, Gen. 47.24. and it is recorded for the commendation of King Uzziah, that he was a lover of Husbandry, 2 Chron. 26.10.

V. 10. *He that loveth ſilver ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver; nor he that loveth abundance with increaſe*] This may be underſtood either Abſolutely by it ſelf, to ſet forth the unſatiable greedineſs of covetous wretches, whoſe deſires are like the grave, and never ſay, *It is enough*, Habak. 2. 5, 6, 8, 9. Iſa. 5. 8. or Comparatively, with relation to what was ſaid before, There is a profit and real benefit which the Earth bringeth unto thoſe that labour about it, but money though a man increaſe it never ſo much, and though it appear never ſo lovely

unto him, yet it cannot of it self satisfie any desire of Nature; if a man be hungry, it cannot feed him; if naked, it cannot cloath him; if cold, it cannot warm him; if sick, it cannot recover him. As it is an instrument of traffick, which answereth unto *All things*, Eccles. 10. 19. So it may be a defence to a man, Chap. 7. 12. and may provide other things for him. But if God should withhold the fruits of the earth, and forbid that to bring them forth, abundance of wealth would be as useless as so many stones; a man hath no good of money, nor of other trades, further then they purchase or manage for us the fruits of the earth.

The later clause some thus render it, *He that loveth it, shall not have any increase by, or in the abundance thereof.* Increase here, is a word which signifieth Increase of the earth, such fruits as may be eaten: and money is not *fructus edulis*, though it come out of the earth. But the prefix ב set before the word *Abundance*, being sometimes a note of the Accusative case, and expressing the object of an Action, we may well record it as it is in our Version; *He that loveth abundance*; as Gen. 34. 1. & 37. 2. Prov. 9. 6. Multitude, or Abundance, here, is taken in the same kind, for gathered wealth, as Psal. 37. 16.

V. 11. *When goods increaſe, they are increaſed that eat them*] He ſhewed the vanity of the love of money; here he ſhewes the vanity of Husbandry and great poſſeſſions: or elſe goeth on upon occaſion of the laſt words, *he that loveth abundance, ſhall not be ſatisfied with increaſe*; becauſe as his wealth increaſeth, his charge and family, and friends, and retinue will increaſe likewiſe. The poſſeſſour can have no more real good, nor ſatisfaction from his great eſtate, then his ſervants have, many hands muſt be ſet on work, and conſequently many bellies filled, many backs cloathed, and they all have their real ſhare as fully, as he himſelf in the things which he poſſeſſeth: no man had greater experience of this then Solomon, of whoſe numerous Family, and large expences we read, 1 Reg. 4.22,26. So we read of the great Family of Abraham, Gen. 14.14.

and what good, or what profit is there to the owners thereof] Chap. 1, 3. & 2. 14. & 3. 9.

ſaving the beholding of them with their eyes?] He hath no advantage above others, ſave that he ſees them eat that, the property whereof is his: and this is ſome good; for it is a more bleſſed thing to give, then to receive, Act. 20. 35. or, he can onely pleaſe

himself with looking on his land or moneys as his own, whereas the real benefit which they yield, doth accrue unto others as well as to himself. And if his eye have any advantage above his servants in this respect, Theirs have an advantage above his in another; for they are refreshed with sweet sleep, which his are usually deprived of.

V. 12. *The sleep of a labouring man*] Or of a servant, or of him that tilleth the ground, or is conversant about any painful trade and work, Gen. 4.2. 2 Sam. 9.10. Prov. 12.11, Isa. 19.9,

is sweet] Whether he eat little or much: If he eat little, his labour causeth sweet sleep: If much, his healthiness and strength causing good concoction, doth not suffer his sleep to be disquieted with crude and offensive vapours. Besides labour taking up the minde, doth free it from those careful thoughts and covetings which are usually the hinderers of sweet sleep.

but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep] This may be understood either of abundance of wealth, with the many cares, businesses, fears, troubles, which are consequent thereupon, Gen. 41.29. Prov. 3.10, Luke 12.16,17. or of fulness of dyet, gluttony and excess of delicious fare, which causeth distempers, and so hindereth sleep. This seemeth

ſeemeth rather to be intended, (becauſe he mentioned eating before) and ſo to be directed againſt rich Gluttons, who ſpend their time in riot, feaſting and exceſs, and ſo overcharge Nature with intemperance, beyond its ſtrength, Luke 16.19. & 21.34. which cauſeth indigeſtion and malignant vapours whereby ſleep is removed or diſquieted, Eccleſ.8.16.Prov.4.16,17.and this is a great vexation; for ſweet ſleep is a bleſſing of God to man, Pſal.127.2. Prov.3.24.

V.13. *There is a ſore evil which I have ſeen under the Sun*] An evil that cauſeth Sickneſs, a very grievous and bitter evil. Or an Evil falling on men, Chap.6.2.

riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt] Prov. 1. 19. Either being unto them occaſions of ſin, & fuel of luſt,cauſing pride, vanity, oppreſſion, violence, gaming, gluttony, idleneſs, exceſs, Hab. 2.9,10. Luke 12.15——21. 1 Tim.6.9,10. Luke 16.19. Deut.6.11,12. & 8.10,11,12. Prov.30.9. Jam. 2. 6,7. & 5.3——6. or elſe expoſing them unto envy and danger, to rapine and violence, Prov.13.8. 2 Reg.25.6,7,9,12.

V.14. *But thoſe riches periſh by evil travel*] Or, with much affliction. Either by their own improvidence, imprudence, luxury,&c. or by the fraud, circumvention and

violence of others, or by caſualties and miſcarriages in trading: or by ſome ſecret blaſt and curſe from God, Prov. 23. 5. and that after much travel and toyl to get them, after much ſollicitude and anxious care to keep them, after much providence and tenderneſs towards his children to lay up for them.

he begetteth a ſon, and there is nothing in his hand] Or, in his power and poſſeſſion, Dan. 2. 38. Joh. 3. 35. 1 Reg. 20. 6. 1 Chr. 29. 12. *his hand*, (*i.*) either the fathers, to to leave unto the ſon; or the ſons, to inherit it after his father.

V. 15. *As he came forth of his mothers womb, naked ſhall he return to go as he came*] Though he could ſecure all his wealth from periſhing, yet he himſelf muſt leave them, and go out of the World as naked as he came into it, And that which hath no power to free us from death, to comfort us in death, to go with us into another World after death, is no foundation of happineſs or ſolid tranquillity, Job 1. 21. Pſal. 49. 17. 1 Tim. 6. 7. Luke 12. 20, 21.

to go] (*i.*) To dye, Chap. 6. 4. Job 16. 22. Pſal. 39. 13. Phil. 1. 23. *Return, viz.* to the Womb of the common mother, the earth, Job. 1. 21. Eccleſ. 12. 7.

and ſhall take nothing of his labour] That is, of his eſtate gotten by hard labour, Chap. 2. 19.

2.19. Prov.5.10. Deut. 28.33. which he may carry away, or cauſe to go along with him, in his hand. He cannot carry ſo much as one handful of all that he hath with him.

V. 16. *And this alſo is a ſore evil*] As before, verſ. 13. That though his Riches haply are not kept for his hurt; nor do not periſh in his time, yet they will not at all keep him from death, nor profit him in it. Riches will not profit in the day of wrath.

that in all points as he came, ſo ſhall he go] His death and his birth are over againſt one another in an exact proportion.

and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?] For that which will not ſtay, which cannot be held faſt, which is emptineſs and very vanity. So words of wind, are empty and vain words, Job 16.3. A man walking in wind, that is, a lying Prophet, Mic.2.11. ſo to *reap a whirlwind*, Hoſ. 8.7. to fill the belly with the eaſt wind, Job 15. 2. to *inherit wind*, Prov. 11. 29. to bring forth wind, Iſa.26.18. To *feed upon wind*, Hoſ.12.1. To ſpeak into the ayr, 1 Cor.14. 9. To beat the ayr, 1 Cor. 9. 16. Are expreſſions of very vain and fruitleſs enterprizes. Here money is compared to wind; The one hath wings to fly away with, Prov. 23.5. ſo hath the other, Pſal.104, 3. The one

one cannot be held, Prov.30.4. neither can the other, 1 Cor.7.31.

V. 17. *All his dayes alſo he eateth in darkneſſe, and hath much ſorrow and wrath with his ſickneſſe.*] Or, according to the words in their order, thus, *Alſo all his dayes he eateth in darkneſſe, and much ſorrow, and his ſickneſſe, and wrath.* A further vanity of Riches in the hands of a covetous worldling, he denies himſelf a full, free, and comfortable enjoyment of outward things, he cannot unbend himſelf from his carking cares even when he goes to eat, but as he gets, ſo he uſeth and enjoyeth his wealth in darkneſs, *i. e.* (for the words following are Exegetical) in ſorrow, and wrath, even unto very ſickneſs.

All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs] It may be underſtood either literally, that he doth ſo lengthen out his labour, and grudge to ſpare himſelf any times even of neceſſary refreſhment, as that he deferreth eating till it be dark, and till he can work no longer. Or rather Metaphorically, he eateth without any pleaſure, and with much trouble and anxiety of minde; ſo much darkneſs commonly importeth, Iſa.49.9,10. & 50.10. Mic.7.8.

and hath much ſorrow] Or, *indignation.* The word in ſome Copies (as the Learned obſerve)

obſerve) is read with the points of a noun; in others, of a verb, and ſo they render it, *multum iraſcitur*, or *indignatur*, he is very angry, or he ſorroweth much, and hath ſickneſs, and wrath. The meaning (as I conceive) is, *he eateth in darkneſs*, baſely, and wretchedly, as a ſlave to his riches; he ſtorms, grieves, frets, is even ſick with anger and vexation, at the expences he is put unto in keeping but a mean and a ſordid Table. The Greek by a very eaſie miſtake in the letters which are much alike, read it thus, *All his dayes he is in darkneſſe,* καὶ ἐν πένθει, *and in mourning, and in ſorrow, and in ſickneſſe, and in wrath.* His ſickneſs, for, he hath ſickneſs. The Affix is uſed for the ſeparate and abſolute pronoun; as Pſal. 115. 7. Ezek.29.3. Our reading, *He hath ſorrow and wrath with his ſickneſſe*, (where the conjunction copulative is rendred by the prepoſition [*with*] as ſometimes elſewhere, 1 Sam.14.18.) ſeemeth to intimate ſuch a ſenſe as this, All his dayes, or while he lives, he eats in ſorrow, and when he falls ſick, and is in danger of death, he hath much wrath and indignation in his ſickneſs, for fear of parting from his wealth, which he ſo dearly loveth, and hath ſo hardly laboured for.

V. 18. *Behold, that which I have ſeen, It is good and comely*, &c.] Here is ſubjoyn-

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ed a remedy of this Vanity, ſetting forth the right uſe of riches, to take away all this ſinful anxiety which is converſant about them; which is, in the fear of God comfortably to enjoy his good bleſſings, without afflicting our ſelves for the future, but caſting our cares upon him, who careth for us.

that which I have ſeen, is this] He ſpeaketh out of experience, and upon exact ſtudy and inquiry after the truth; as 1 Joh. 1. 1, 3. Joh. 1. 14. Chap 1. 13. & 2. 24. & 3. 22.

It is good and comely] Good and comfortable to a man himſelf. Comely, decent, honourable, and of good report toward others. Or, there is a good which is alſo comely. Or, it is good, yea, it is comely. Or, Behold I have ſeen that which is good, that which is comely. The like manner of expreſſion, 1 Sam. 15. 20. Pſal. 10. 6. Teaching us in our converſation, 1. To look unto that which is good in it ſelf, and then to that which is decent towards the world, Phil. 4. 8.

that a man eat and drink, and enjoy good of all his labour] Or, In all his labours, to ſweeten his labours with a comfortable fruition of the fruit of them. Of all his labours; ſo the Prepoſition ב is uſed, to ſignifie as much as *Ex* or *De*, Exod. 12. 43.

all

all the dayes of his life which God giveth him] When God gives life, we ſhould not deny the comforts of it to ourſelves.

for it is his portion] All the good he can ever have from them: A metaphor from diviſion of heritances; or from diſtribution of meat at a feaſt. It is that which God hath allotted him of all his labour. But withal, he muſt remember, that God allowes him but a part; God himſelf, and the poor, and his family, country, friends, challenge part likewiſe in thoſe goods, wherewith God hath bleſſed him, Prov. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 9. 13, 14. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Gal. 6. 6, 10. 2 Cor. 12. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 8. Iſai. 23. 18.

V. 19. *Every man alſo to whom God hath given*, &c.] Here is onely a further inſiſting on the ſame argument; as Chap. 2. 24. & 3. 13. & 6. 2. He ſhews, 1. That God gives us our wealth, Deut. 8. 18. 2. That he gives us dominion over our wealth, that we may not be captivated unto it; every man is a ſlave to his eſtate further then God ſets them free. 3. Wherein this power ſtands; 1. in uſing it, to eat thereof; 2. in uſing it proportionable to his condition; or as Divines ſpeak, *Secundum decentiam ſtatus*, to take his portion: 3. To uſe it with fruition and cheerfulneſſe, to rejoyce in it, 1 Tim. 6. 17. 4. Not to let his joy ſwallow

up

up his duty, nor his delight his labour, but to ſweeten his labour with joy, and to moderate his joy with labour, Eph.4.28. 1.5. To uſe, and to enjoy his own, the fruit of his own labour, not to be burdenſom or injurious unto others, 2 Theſſ.3.12.

V. 20. *For he ſhall not much remember the dayes of his life*] Some make the ſenſe to be thus, Although he give not much, or although it be not much which God hath given, (which ſenſe the diſtinguiſhing Accent doth ſomewhat favour) yet he ſhall remember, that all his life long, God ſweetneth that little unto him with the joy of his heart: And a little with joy and cheerfulneſs, and Gods bleſſing, is better then much riches of the ungodly, Pſal.37.16. Prov.17.1. Luk. 12.15. Prov.15.17. Dan.1.15. But our Tranſlation preferreth another ſenſe, which ſeems moſt conſonant to the drift of the place, He that in this manner, doth cheerfully enjoy the bleſſings which God gives him, ſhall not, with much ſorrow or wearineſs, remember the troubles of his life; neither ſhall his labour be very irkſome or grievous unto him, becauſe the Lord doth anſwer him, or doth proportionably unto his labors, return comfort to him in the joy of his heart, in the joyful and contented fruition of them.

becauſe

becauſe God anſwereth him in the joy of his heart] Anſwereth all his labour with joy, giveth him ſuch joy of heart, as is a full compenſation for all his labour. As money is ſaid to anſwer unto all things, in a proportionable value to them all, Eccl. 10. 19. ſo ſhall his joy bear a full value to all the labour which was taken for it. Other expoſitions there are, but this is moſt genuine and natural.

CHAP. VI.

IN this Chapter is continued a further deſcription of the common vanity of riches, in the hands of a covetous perſon. He is here ſet forth,

Firſt, By the good things which he hath; 1. Riches in abundance, riches and wealth. 2. Honour, and both to the uttermoſt of his deſires, verſ. 2. 3. Many Children. 4. Many years, a great old age, verſ. 3, 6.

Secondly, By his miſery, which makes all that vain unto him. 1. God gives him not power to enjoy it. 2. A ſtranger eateth it. 3. His Soul is not filled with good. 4. He hath no burial, verſ. 2, 3.

Thirdly, the cenſure of all this: 1. Abſolutely, 2. Comparatively. Abſolutely; It is firſt, an evil; ſecondly, a common evil; thirdly,

thirdly, a vanity; fourthly, a diſeaſe, verſ. 1, 2. Comparatively, an untimely birth, or abortive is better; For, 1. He is born dead, and ſo free from ſenſe of miſeries, which the other diſcruciated himſelf withal. 2. He departs in darkneſs, without the loſs of light and comfort, which the other denies unto himſelf. 3. His name is covered in darkneſs, the others name is odious, verſ. 4. 4. He hath not ſeen the Sun, nor known any thing: the other hath indeed ſeen the Sun, but hath ſeen no good, nor known any thing but ſorrow and vexation, and at laſt goes to the ſame place, verſ. 5, 6. This vanity he further opens:

First, By the narrow uſe of Riches, and all the labour converſant about them; it terminates in the body; it cannot ſatiate the minde nor appetite; that is, if evil and covetous, inſatiable; if wiſe and prudent, above ſatisfaction by theſe things, verſ. 7. That they cannot ſatisfie the minde, appears, becauſe then wiſe men might find out ſome more good in them then fools; but the wiſeſt can have no more out of them, then for their mouths, and ſo have fools, and the pooreſt men that know how to live, as well as the richeſt, verſ. 8.

Secondly, By the vanity of wandring and endleſſe deſires; the wiſe, the fooliſh, the rich,

rich, the poor have things preſent and neceſſary, ſo long as they live, they have enough to that uſe; and this is a real fruit, much better, then to let the heart wander and weary it ſelf in endleſs deſires, verſ. 9.

Thirdly, By the impoſſibility of mending a mans condition by theſe things, or of raiſing him above the ſtate of mortality and infirmity. A man will be but a man how rich ſoever he be, and all his wealth will not guard him againſt the evils incident to humanity, verſ. 10. He will be ſtill never the better by ſuch things, as do but increaſe vanity, verſ. 11.

Fourthly, By the ignorance of man to make the beſt uſe of things, and to reſolve himſelf, whether a great, or a moderate eſtate be better for him; eſpecially conſidering the ſhortneſſe of his life, and the ignorance of what will become of his Eſtate or Family after he is gone, verſ. 12. Thus we may connex the two laſt Verſes, with the Argument of thoſe before: or rather we may take them for a general concluſion of all the precedent vanities, ſince ſo many things there are which increaſe vanity, what is man the better for them, verſ. 11. For firſt, amongſt them all, he can hardly know what is good for himſelf. 2. If he do, he can enjoy that good but a little while, his very life (the beſt outward

bleſſing

bleſſing he hath) is vain, and but a ſhadow 3. When his life is over, he ſhall be never the better for any thing which comes after him. 4. Neither can he pleaſe himſelf with the fore-ſight of what ſhall be after him, becauſe he cannot tell it to himſelf, neither can any man elſe declare it to him.

Verſ. 1. *There is an evil which I have ſeen under the Sun*] He ſhews the miſery of a diſcontented covetous diſpoſition, and that it is a ſpecial gift of God to beſtow upon a man the ſweet enjoyment of outward bleſſings, which when he hath, he is apt enough to deny unto himſelf.

and it is common amongſt men] Or *much and great.* Covetouſneſs is both a great ſin, and yet a very uſual and frequent ſin, that it is to be met with, in all parts of the habitable world, where ever the Sun riſeth and ſetteth. The commonneſs of ſin, doth not at all extenuate the greatneſſe of it, but rather aggravate the ſame, Pſal. 14. 2. 3. Jer. 5. 1. 5.

V. 2. *A man to whom God hath given*, &c.] There is a man, who hath all things that heart can deſire, not onely riches, but ſubſtance of all ſorts, lands, moveables, with honour and great place, 2 Chron. 1. 11, 12.

ſo that he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he deſireth] He is not defective, or

deſti-

deſtitute of any thing which his ſoul can wiſh for; his ſubſtance extends to all juſt and large deſires; it cannot be exhauſted or worn out, Deut.8.9. Iſa.51.14. 1 Reg.17. 16. He ſpeaketh not of the boundleſs deſires of covetous men, which are never ſatisfied; but of the juſt deſires, which a man of dignity and honour could have, in order to the decency of his eſtate, and to the quality of his place. He cannot rationally wiſh for any thing towards the ſatisfaction of his juſt deſires, which his eſtate will not plentifully afford him, Pſal.73.7. Luk.12,17,18. Job 21.7—13. Pſal.17.14. All this a covetous wretch is ſaid to have from God, not in a way of bleſſing, as if God did proſper and approve of his ſordid, or ſinful waies of gain; but in a way onely of providence, his Sun ſhining on the juſt and unjuſt, Matth. 5. 45.

yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof] Chap.5. 18,19. To eat of them, importeth a moderate and prudent uſe of them, for neceſſity and delight, taking a mans own portion; this is a ſpecial curſe and judgement of God, when a man hath not an heart to enjoy the bleſſings which God beſtoweth on him: as the contrary is a bleſſing from God, Chap.5.19.

but a ſtranger eateth them] One that is in

in no relation of neerneſs, blood, friendſhip to him: or an enemy, who ſpoileth and plundreth him of them. This is noted as a great affliction, Hoſ. 7. 9. Deut. 28. 33. Iſa. 1. 7. Lam. 5. 2. Jer. 5. 17. Here the Learned obſerve a difference, between a mans own uſe of his goods and a ſtrangers; for he himſelf doth but eat of them; but a ſtranger eateth them. The former noteth care, moderation, providence: The later, cruelty and devouring, without pity without meaſure.

This is a vanity, and an evil diſeaſe] Not onely a fruitleſſe thing, but a very grievous trouble, when a man by ſordid thoughts, baſeneſs of ſpirit, unquiet and inceſſant cares, greedy deſires, diſtruſtful jealouſies, anxious fears, thronging imployments, keeps himſelf from taking any delight in his abundance, and pierceth himſelf through with divers ſorrows, 1 Tim. 6. 10.

V. 3. *If a man beget an hundred children*] He ſpake before of one, who had none to ſucceed him in his eſtate, but a ſtranger; here, he ſhews the miſery of a covetous perſon to be as great, though he have many children, and live many years. Theſe be greater bleſſings in themſelves, Pſalm 127. 3, 4, 5. therefore children were called the glory of their Parents, Hoſ. 9. 11. Job 5. 25, 26.

Pſal.

Pſal. 21. 5. & 128. 6. But covetouſneſſe takes away the comfort of them.

an hundred children] Very many; a certain number for an uncertain; as 1 Cor. 14. 19. Prov. 17. 10. 1. Sam 18. 7.

many years, ſo that the dayes of his years be many] He ſeemeth, ſpeaking of long life, to correct himſelf, and call it rather *many dayes*, then *many years*: ſo Gen. 47. 9.

and his ſoul be not filled with good] Or, *ſatisfied with good*. Either in regard of his own inſatiable deſires, or of ſome curſe of God, mixing biterneſſe therewith; as Chap. 5. 10. Job 9. 25. By *his ſoul*, is meant τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν, his appetite and deſires; as Gen. 34. 8. 1. Sam. 20. 4. Pſal. 103. 6. Others, underſtand this of the vanity of children and old age without riches, when a man is ſo poor, that he hath nothing to ſatisfie nature while he lives, and cannot leave enough to bury him when he is dead Which ſenſe is touched at in the Contents of the Chapter, in our Engliſh Bibles.

and alſo that he have no burial] Either through cruelty of murtherers & ſpoylers, or through neglect of heirs and ſucceſſors, who deny him an honourable interment. It is a part of humane miſery to be without burial, Deut. 28. 26. 1 Reg. 14. 11, 13. 2 Reg. 9. 37. Iſai. 14 20. Jer. 8. 2 & 16. 4. & 22. 19. 2 Chron. 21. 19.

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I ſay, that an untimely birth is better then he] In regard of outward reſpects, never to have felt good or evil, not to be born at all, or to be born and die at once, then to live long in miſery, and then dye without love or honour from any. Hereby is noted the baſe condition of ſuch a perſon, who is worſe then an untimely birth, which hath not had the ordinary comfort of the meaneſt living creatures, to ſee the Sun, Job 3.10,11,12, 16. Pſal.58.8.

V. 4. *For he cometh in with vanity*] (*i.*) He is born, Job 1.21. Joſh.1.9. To no purpoſe. That which never comes to perfection, but melteth and vaniſheth away as ſoon as it is born, is born in vain.

and departeth in darkneſſe] Or, into darkneſſe, or, obſcurely without any notice. A Periphraſis of death, Eccl.11.8.

his name ſhall be covered with darkneſſe] (*i.*) Shall utterly be forgotten; there ſhall never be any mention of him.

V. 5. *hath not ſeen the Sun*] Job 3.16. Hath not felt any worldly delight, and therefore is not affected with the loſs of it.

nor known] Hath had no uſe, either of ſenſe or reaſon, and ſo cannot compare the evil of loſs with the good of fruition.

this hath more reſt then the other] For he reſts immediately from the womb, whereas a covetous man lives a toylſome and unquiet life, and then parts with all, unwillingly, into the condition of the abortive.

V. 6. *Yea, though he live a thouſand years twice told*] Whereas it might be objected, that the one hath lived a long life, and that alone is a bleſſing; and therefore in that reſpect, he is to be preferred before an untimely birth. He anſwereth, That long life, without ſeeing good, doth but lengthen out miſery; It is not the life, but the good, which makes a ſolid difference, Pſal. 34. 12. elſe the evil of the day, Matth. 6. 34. makes day and life it ſelf undeſirable, Job 3. 20——23 & 7. 1, 2.

Do not all go to one place] As well he that lives longeſt, as he that never ſaw the Sun: and though one never ſaw the Sun, yet if the other never ſaw good, but only wearies himſelf with ſorrowes and vanity, and goes to the ſame duſt; what difference is there between them?

V. 7. *All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled*] *For his mouth*; For his bodily ſuſtenance, and the ſervices of life. Here is firſt a Metonymie of the ſubject, the mouth for the nouriſhment which is put into it: and then a Synecdoche,

necdoche, of the part for the whole; food being, though the principal, yet but one part of mans neceſſary proviſion; all which the Apoſtle comprizeth in food and rayment, 1 Tim. 6. 8. All the real fruit which any man can reap of all his worldly labours, is to have his daily bread, the bread of his allowance, or food convenient for him, Prov. 30. 8. Things ſimply neceſſary for life, and things ſecundarily neceſſary for the decency of his condition, and proportion of his quality and degree in the world.

yet the appetite is not filled] (1.) Either the covetous deſires of a worldling remain ſtill inſatiable, he is not contented with his own portion, he cannot contain his heart within the limits of reaſon or religion; but though he have abundantly ſufficient for all his wants, yet he toyleth ſtill as if he had nothing, Chap. 4. 8. Or elſe, The Soul is not filled; riches may benefit the body, and feed, and cloath, and comfort that, but to the nobler part of man, they can afford no ſatisfaction, they do not bear any proportion at all. They cannot hold the ſoul, Luk. 12. 19,20. They cannot help the Soul in a day of trouble, Prov. 11. 4. Zeph. 1. 18. They cannot follow it into another World, Pſal. 49. 17. They have no ſuteableneſs, either in excellency or duration unto it.

V. 8.

V. 8. *For what hath the wiſe more then the fool,* &c.] This queſtion is a denyal, The Wiſe man hath nothing more then the fool. Internal excellency there is in wiſdom above folly, Chap. 2. 13. But here he ſpeaketh with relation to wealth, and the outward events of things, in which regard, the Wiſe man hath no peculiar prerogative above the fool. The one fares as deliciouſly, is cloathed as richly, hath Lands and Revenues left him by his Anceſtors, as well as the other. The wiſeſt man can but provide for back and belly, and ſuch other conveniences, as outward things are proper to ſupply; and ſo much may he do who hath Wealth without Wit. Outward things promiſcuouſly happen unto all, and beyond their own uſe, they are not able to ſupply a wiſe man more then a fool.

what hath the poor which knoweth to walk before the living?] A poor man that lives, hath the ſubſtantial benefit of outward things as well as the richeſt or the wiſeſt. What hath he leſſe then the rich? he knowes how to get his living, and walk through his ſhort time of life, as well as the other. Or, what hath the poor wiſe man, who by his induſtry and prudent converſing amongſt men doth

maintain himself, more then the poor foolish man, who makes a shift to live as well as the other?

to walk before the living] That is, to live decently and discreetly amongst men, Chap. 4. 15. Isa. 42. 5. Psal. 56. 13. Chap. 7. 12.

V. 9. *Better is the sight of the eyes, then the wandring of the Desire*] By *the sight of the Eyes*, he meaneth things present, and in possession, which we have before us, in our eye, and in hand: by the wandring or walking of the Soul, he meaneth an insatiable and endlesse pursuit of the heart after things which we have not, and cannot easily overtake. So sight is opposed by the Apostle to Faith, Because Sight looketh on things in possession; Faith, on things in expectation, 2 Cor. 5. 7. and so property or possession is before called the seeing of things with the eye, Eccles. 5. 11. And on the other side, unsatisfied desires are expressed by wandring of the heart up and down, Isa. 57. 10. Jer. 2. 25. & 14. 10. when the minde is not stayed and fixed with contentment in its present condition, but like a Bee flyeth from flower to flower, from creature to creature, to gather more. This then is the plain meaning of these words, It is better for a man quietly

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and contentedly to enjoy the things which he hath in preſent poſſeſſion, then to rove up and down, and weary himſelf with anxious and unſatisfied deſires after things which he hath not: ſince the poor man hath as much the ſubſtantial and principal benefit of outward things, as the Rich, namely life and health, and food convenient: ſince the wiſeſt man that is, can fetch no more real good out of wealth, then fools themſelves do enjoy from it, It is much more comfortable to enjoy what we have, then endleſly to weary our ſelves in hoarding and hunting after more, Matth. 6. 25——31. This is the ſame in ſenſe with that, Chap. 4. 6. but ſpoken here by Solomon as a remedy againſt covetous deſires; there, by the ſluggard, as an apology for his lazineſs. Though ſome would have it here underſtood in the perſon of a covetous Rich man. As if he would anſwer Solomons queſtion: What good hath one more then another, the wiſe then the fools, the rich then the poor? yes ſaith the covetous rich man, he hath an Eſtate to look on, the other is continually vexed with want and deſires: and it is much better to be in poſſeſſion of a good Eſtate, then to languiſh under poverty, and be ever in a craving condition. But the former ſenſe is more genuine.

This also is vanity and vexation of spirit] That is, in the later sense, It is a vain and troublesome thing to possess good things only to look on them, and not to use them. Or rather in the former sense, the wandring of the fool up and down after new gain, and denying it self the comfortable fruition of present contentments, is vanity, because much can do a man no more real good, then a little cheerfully used: and *vexation of spirit*, because insatiable desires bring perpetual disquiet upon the heart of a man.

V. 10. *That which hath been, is named already*] He sheweth the vanity of wandring desires, and greedy endeavours after greater things then God hath yet afforded a man: for whatever things have been or are, whether a man be rich or poor, noble or base, his condition comes not unto him by chance, but is præ-assigned him, in the purpose and decree of God, and therefore much better is it for him contentedly to enjoy what God gives, then with a vain and ineffectual ambition, to strive for things without his reach. Especially since no things acquireable by humane industry, can exempt or protect a man from the evils, or common miseries which mankind is exposed unto. Let one grow as Rich, as potent, as Honourable as the world can make him; A man he was born

fore, and he will be but a man ſtill, from earth he came, and to earth he will go, he lies under a decree of mortality and infirmity, which by the help of no worldly wealth or greatneſs, he is able to break through.

That which hath been, The name of it is called already] That is, Its ſtate, quality, order, condition, every thing belonging to the nature and being of it, every thing externally happening unto it, is all pre-ordained in the counſel and decree of God. He by his immutable and irreſiſtible providence hath aſſigned unto every one his order, and doth by his wiſdome diſpoſe of all things belonging unto men, They are under his care and allowance, and therefore ought not anxiouſly and ſollicitouſly to inſiſt upon proviſions for the future, but rather comfortably to enjoy things preſent, and in a conſcionable diſcharge of duty, to wait for a like bleſſing and providence of God for hereafter, as ever before they have had experience of, Pſal. 37. 11, 31, 14, 15. 1 Sam. 2. 7, 8. Act. 2. 24. & 4. 28.

and it is known that it is man] Be his wealth or honours what they will, yet a frail, mortal, mutable, earthly creature he is ſtill, as he was before. And though men have been ſo dementated with worldly greatneſs, as to take Divine honour to themſelves, and

to think themselves lawless, and exempted from the bonds of other men, yet it is known and visible, that they remain men still, and so God will at last make them known to themselves, Psal. 9. 20. Ezek. 28. 6, 9. Isa. 2. 22. & 31. 3.

Neither may he contend with him that is mightier then he] He cannot implead God, nor enter an action or suit in Judgement with him, he cannot call him to an account, or judge him; he may not think by contending with God, to alter or break through the order of his providence or decrees, Isa. 45. 9. Job 9. 2, 3, 12. Jer. 50. 44. Job. 4. 17. Rom. 9. 20. Ps. 51. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 22. Ezek. 22. 14. Ps. 33. 10, 11. Job. 34. 23.

V. 11. *Seeing there be many things which increase vanity, what is man the better?* This is commonly understood as a further argument against insatiable desires of wealth, because where there are many of them, the increase doth but increase vanity, that is the usual concomitant of great abundance, more cares, more distractions, more fears, more troubles and imployments come along with them, and yet man is not a whit better then he was before, he was fed, and cloathed then, and he is no more now. Can he carry any of them with him? can he find in any more excellency in them? will the

any real advantage remain unto him more then his own portion, and comfortable accommodations by them? But I rather conceive theſe words to be a ſolemn concluſion of all the former diſcoveries of vanity in the creatures, and repetition of what he gave ſummarily before, Chap. 1, 3. It was there laid down as the Propoſition which he undertook to demonſtrate, and having demonſtrated it, it is here in the cloſe of the whole diſcourſe reſumed again, and the whole drawn together in one brief recapitulation, ſeeing there are thus many things, wiſdome, folly, pleaſures, honours, crowns, riches, that increaſe vanity, what is man the better in regard of ſolid happineſs and contentment for any, or for all of them?

V. 12. *For who knoweth what is good for man in this life?*] Amongſt ſuch variety of things under the Sun which the heart of man is apt to be drawn unto, neither he himſelf nor any other is able certainly to inform him, which of all thoſe is beſt for him to enjoy and reap comfort from. Whether it be better for him to be rich or poor, in a high or low condition, in a private retirement, or in publick ſervice; ſome mens greatneſs hath undone them, or other mens meanneſs hath ſecured them, 2 Reg. 25. 9, 12. Some men had not been ſo wicked, if they had not

been ſo learned; others had not been ſo vitious, if great wealth had not excited and been fuel to feed their luſts. Achitophel might have lived longer with leſs wiſdome, and Nabal with leſs wealth. No man can tell whether that which he ſnatcheth at, as the filly fiſh, with moſt greedineſs, and greateſt expectation of contentment from it, may not be temper'd with poyſon, or have a hook under it, and ſo be the occaſion of his greater miſery, Rom. 1. 22. 2 Pet. 2. 18, 19. Rom. 6. 21. Prov. 1. 13, 18, 19.

All the dayes of his vain life which he ſpendeth as a ſhadow] If he do by chance, rather then by election, happen upon that way and courſe which was beſt for him, yet his very life, the beſt of all outward bleſſings, is it ſelf but a very vanity and ſhadow. It is but a very little while before he muſt part with it, and all thoſe comforts which rendred it peaceable and cheerfull to him. A very elegant deſcription of the ſhortneſs of mans life, All the number of the dayes of the life of his vanity, which he ſpendeth as a ſhadow: 1. He calleth them dayes, not years. 2. Dayes that may be numbred, which likewiſe intimateth fewneſs of them, as Job. 16. 22. Iſa. 10. 19. Pſal. 105. 12. Num. 9. 20. 3. A life of vanity; a very vain life. The ſubſtantive for the adjective; as Pſal. 31. 3. &

3. & 68. 31. Pſal. 140. 12. Rom. 7. 24. Epheſ. 4. 24. Phil. 3. 21. 4. A life ſpent like a ſhadow, that hath little of ſubſtance while it laſts, and doth preſently vaniſh away, Pſ. 39. 6. & 144. 4. Job. 14. 2. Jam. 4. 14. Job. 8. 9.

for who can tell a man what ſhall be after him under the Sun.] As a man can have little ſatisfaction by outward good things here in his own ſight and life-time, ſo can he promiſe himſelf as little in name or family, when he is gone, becauſe he can by no means foreſee or foreknow future and contingent events, Chap. 2. 18, 19.

CHAP. VII.

THe Wiſe man having ſet forth many vanities of this life; and the great diſappointment which men meet with, who ſeek for happineſs and ſatisfaction from them, and thereupon the vexation which naturally ariſeth from ſuch a diſappointment: and having interwoven ſome general remedies againſt theſe vanities, namely, the fear and worſhip of God, and the cheerfull enjoyment of outward bleſſings: He here proceedeth to many other particular means of healing the vanities of this Life, and procuring tranquillity and peace to the mind of man

in

in the midſt of them. Such are, 1. A good name, ve. 1. 2. A compoſed preparedneſs of mind to entertain death, the chiefeſt outward evil, and conſequently to bear any any other ſorrow, verſe 2, 3, 6. 3. Moderation and patience of ſpirit to bear with preſent evils, and to digeſt injuries, expecting the end and iſſue which God will give, verſ. 7—10. 4. Wiſdome to defend a mans ſelf againſt the vanity of Riches, verſ. 11, 12. 5. Acquieſcency in the Government of all things by the wiſe providence of God, verſ. 13, 15. 6. Contentation of heart in all eſtates, as well adverſity as proſperity, conſidering Gods wiſe and juſt tempering of them together for our good, verſ. 14. 7. Prudent and pious moderation of our behaviour, ſo as that we may not by raſh zeal, or inordinate walking, expoſe our ſelves to danger and trouble, verſ. 16, 17. 8. Reſolution and conſtancy in the fear of God, verſ. 18. 9. Wiſdome of meekneſs, charity, and patience towards ſuch as offend, conſidering the general frailty of humane nature, and the experience and ſence of our own weakneſs, verſ. 19—22. 10. Contentment with ſuch a meaſure of wiſdome as is in this life attainable, and not to buſie and diſquiet our thoughts with things which are above us, verſ. 23, 24. Now as before in the

the handling of humane vanities he did occaſionally intermix ſome Remedies thereof: ſo here in handling the remedies of it, and the means to obtain tranquillity of mind, he doth here and there intermix ſome other vanities, which are great occaſions of vexation and unquietneſs to the heart of man: one principal one, whereof he had had very ſad experience, he doth here ſubjoyn, namely, the bitterneſs of an enſnaring woman, verſ. 25——29.

Verſ. 1. A *Good name is better then pretious oyntment*] Or, *A name is good before good oyntment. A name*, for, *a good name*, as, *a wife*, for, *a good wife*, Prov. 18. 22. By *a good name*, underſtand that which hath its foundation in an innocent, unblameable and profitable life, when a man hath reverence in the conſcience of others, 2 Cor. 4. 2. for *the name of the wicked will rot*, Prov. 10. 7. So to be a man of name, is meant an eminent perſon, renowned in his generation, Gen. 6. 4. 1 Chron. 5. 24. and names of men, Rev. 11. 3. & 3. 4. may ſeem to note ſpecial perſons of honour and renown.

better then ſweet oyntment] So the name of Chriſt which ſignifieth his gratious doctrine, Act. 9. 15. is compared unto ſweet oyntment,

oyntment, Cant. 1. 3. called the *ſweet ſavour of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 2. 14, 15. Pretious Aromatical oyntments were things greatly in uſe and eſteem amongſt the Iſraelites, and a ſpecial part of their treaſures: appointed by God to anoint the holy veſſels of the Tabernacle, Exod. 30. 22——33. uſed in the conſecration of perſons to offices of honour and eminency, Exod. 28, 41. 1 Sam. 16. 13. Pſal. 89. 20. called therefore *the oyl of gladneſs*, Heb. 1, 9. Iſa. 61. 3. uſed likewiſe in Feaſts, great entertainments and expreſſions of joy, Amos 6. 6. Eſther 2, 12. Pſal. 23. 5. Luk. 7. 46. Reckoned amongſt the ſpecial bleſſings of God, and treaſures of that people, Pſal. 92. 10. Job. 29. 6. Deut. 33. 24. Prov. 21. 20. Iſa. 39. 2. whence ſome would have it here taken ſynecdochically to ſignifie all kind of riches, before which Solomon doth here prefer a good name; as alſo Prov. 22. 1.

and the day of death, then the day of ones birth] Some underſtand here a note of ſimilitude to joyn the two clauſes together, *As a good name is better then ſweet oyntment, ſo is the day of death then the day of Birth.* Others repeat the former clauſe in the later, unto ſuch a man who hath a good name, better is the day of death, then of birth. And the clauſes ſeem to have Cognation with one another:

another: for the day of Birth is a time of feſtivity and rejoycing, and accordingly uſed to be celebrated, Gen. 40. 20. Mar. 6. 21, 22. in which kind of ſolemnities, they uſed to anoint themſelves with ſweet oyntments: as on the other ſide, in dayes of ſorrow, they abſtained from them, 2 Sam. 14. 2. Dan. 10. 23. On the other ſide, The day of Death removes a man wholly out of this world, and leaves nothing of him behind, but only his Name and Memory, which the Lord threatneth wicked men to blot out, and cauſe it to rot, Deut. 29. 20. & 32. 26. Prov, 10. 7. Job 18. 17. But the name of good men remains behind them, as the ſweet ſavour of a pretious perfume, when the ſubſtance of the perfume it ſelf is conſumed with the fire: or as ſpices when they are broken and diſſolved, leave an excellent ſcent behind them. And ſo the meaning is, That although the day of birth be a day of feaſting and joy, and the day of death a day of ſorrow and mourning, yet unto a good man this is much better then the other, and the memorial which he leaves behind him, is much ſweeter then that of ſpices or perfumes. If we take the later clauſe alone, without connexion to the former, then they relate unto the many vanities and vexations which the life of man is expoſed unto; in which conſideration,

ſideration, That day which delivers a man from them, is better then that day which lets him into the poſſeſſion of them: for man is born unto much trouble and ſorrow, Job. 5. 7. & 14. 1. but a godly mans death puts a period to all his ſins, to all his ſorrows, Rom. 7. 24. Rev. 14. 13. 2 Cor. 5, 6, 7, 8. Phil. 1. 23.

V. 2. *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning*, &c.] As to a good man, the day of his death is better then the day of his birth, becauſe it puts an end unto all thoſe ſorrows and vanities which he was born unto: ſo for thoſe that remain alive, it is better to go to a funeral, the houſe of mourning, then to a feaſt, or a birth-day ſolemnity, the houſe of jollity and rejoycing.

for that is the end of all men] Or, in the which is the end of all men. In which houſe of ſorrow, a man is minded of the common end of all men. A man ſeeth his own end in the end of another man, and is admoniſhed of his frailty and mortality, for it is the way of the whole earth, Joſh. 23. 14. Heb. 9. 27.

and the living will lay it to heart] Or, will put it up, and faſten it to his heart; will be ſeriouſly and ſadly affected with it, and have deep impreſſions thereby made upon his ſpirit, of the greatneſs and power of

God, who draweth away our breath, and we perish, Psal. 104, 29. and of his own vanity and baseness, even in his best estate, Psal. 39. 5. putting in the heart, noteth diligent attendance on a thing, σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρέσι βάλλεο σήσιν, Deut. 11. 18. Isa. 42. 25. Luk. 21. 14. whereas feasting and jollity is very likely to draw off the remembrance of God, Job. 1. 5. Deut. 8. 12——14. Isa. 22. 13. Amos 6. 3—6. Deut. 32. 15. Isa. 5. 11, 12.

V. 3. *Sorrow is better then laughter*] That sorrow which ariseth from the meditation of death, a sad, sober, and composed temper of spirit, whereby a man is rendred capable of instruction, and sensible of serious things which concern his peace, is better, and doth a man much more good, then laughter and the jollity which belongeth unto Feastings. The word signifieth anger, and so by some is the sense rendred, that charitable and wholsome Anger which reproveth men for their faults, and so maketh them sorrowfull, is better then the flattery of Parasites, which feedeth their foolish lusts with laughter and vain mirth, and so tendeih unto ruine.

for by the sadness of the countenance] Heb. *by the illness or badness of the countenance*, Neh. 2. 2. badness of heart, 1 Sam. 17. 28. The heart is made better. Vain lusts and foolish

fooliſh exorbitant light affections are check'd and ſuppreſſed; as the outward man is grieved, the inward man is amended, Prov. 20. 30. 2 Cor. 4. 16. & 7. 9, 10. whereas on the other ſide, empty mirth doth diſſolve the heart, and let it out unto more vanity, Chap. 2. 2, 3. Hoſ. 4. 11. Eſther. 1. 10. 1. Sam. 25. 36.

V. 4. *The heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning*] He proveth ſorrow to be better, wholſomer for the ſoul then laughter, by the judgement and choyce of wiſe men, and of fools. That which wiſe men prefer, is indeed better then that which fools make choyce of; but wiſe men prefer ſpectacles, places, occaſions of ſorrow; fools make choyce of the contrary: *ergo* that is better then this. Wiſe men conſider the end of things, and chuſe the moſt proper means unto the beſt ends: whereas fools look only on things preſent and before their eyes. By *the houſe of mourning*, we underſtand any place or object which occaſioneth mourning; ſo the grave is called *domus ſeculi*, the houſe of ages, or a mans long home, Eccleſ. 12. 5. So a trench is called a houſe of meaſures, 1 Reg. 18. 32. Iſa. 3. 21.

The heart of the wiſe] When his body is elſewhere, yet his thoughts and heart are thinking on the evil day, which wicked men thruſt

thruſt far from them, Amos 6. 3. So Job in proſperity did with a religious fear forecaſt evil, Job. 3. 25. Neh. 2. 2—5. Pſal. 137. 6.

but the heart of fools is in the houſe of mirth] Though he may by poverty, buſineſs or many other diverſions be abſent in his body, yet by his good will he would have his ſhare in every merry meeting, his heart is upon pleaſures, and his love runs wholly that way, ſo that he is amazed and overwhelmed through unpreparedneſs of heart when any ſudden evil overtakes him, 1 Pet. 4. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 2. 13, 14. Houſes of joy we read of, Iſa. 32. 13. Here then we are taught to moderate our ſelves in regard of outward pleaſures, becauſe love of them is the character of a fool, and of an heart eſtranged from God, Job 21. 12, 13. Prov. 21. 17. 1 Cor. 7. 30. 1 Joh. 2. 15, 16.

V. 5. *It is better to hear the rebuke of the wiſe, then for a man to hear the ſong of fools*] He inſtanceth in another cauſe of ſorrow, namely, the rebukes of wiſe and good men, which though they may ſad the heart of a man for the preſent, yet they are much more wholſome and beneficial, then the ſongs and flatteries of ungodly Paraſites, which ſooth men in their ſins, and feed the flame of their luſts and corruptions. *It is better to hear,*

(*i.*)

(*i.*) patiently, and obediently to liſten to the counſel and reproof of a prudent friend, who doth ſeaſonably, and faithfully diſcover his errours to him, then that a man ſhould hear the ſong of fools, Prov. 13. 18. & 15. 31. 32. & 27. 6. Pſal. 141. 5. It is a token of a wiſe and teachable diſpoſition, to receive with meekneſs the words of reproof, as David did, not only from Nathan a Prophet, 2 Sam. 12. 7—13. but from Abigail a woman, 1 Sam. 25. 32, 33. Heb. 13. 22. Prov. 9. 9. & 17. 10. By *the ſong of fools*, underſtand any flattering ſpeeches, or any merry and pleaſant diſcourſes, being a Synecdoche, whereby all kind of jeſts, and bewitching pleaſures are ſignified, Iſa. 24. 8, 9. Gen. 31. 27.

V. 6. *For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, ſo is the laughter of the fool*:] The voyce of thorns, ſo the noiſe of chariots, is called the voyce of chariots; and the noiſe that fire makes in ſtubble is called the voyce of a flame, Joel 2. 5. Ezek. 1. 24. Fools are here elegantly compared unto thorns, they are burdens to the place they live in, Gen. 3. 17, 18. They are intractable, he muſt be fenced which toucheth them, 2 Sam. 23. 6, 7. They are unprofitable, good for nothing but the fire, Heb. 6. 8. The laughter of theſe fools, that is, all thoſe flatteries, jeſts,

jeſts, vain and frothy diſcourſes, mimical and apiſh practiſes, whereby they beget laughter, and feed the delights of vain men like themſelves, are compared to the noyſe of thorns burning under a pot: as theſe make a ſudden blaze, and a great noiſe, but do no good, preſently go out, and the meat is left as raw as when it was put in; *in ſtipulis magnus ſine viribus Ignis Incaſſum fuerit*: whereas a ſolemn fire in coals or great wood, boyleth the meat without any ſuch noiſe: ſo the effuſe mirth and jollity of fools, (*i.*) of wicked men, though it may ſeem to promiſe more pleaſure and content, then the more ſad and ſevere converſation of ſerious men, yet that doth ſuddenly vaniſh without leaving any ſolid joy behind it; whereas the reproof of wiſe men ſinketh down into the heart, and helps to work out the ſcum and vanity which lay within it, Pſal. 58. 9. & 118. 12. and as the crackling of thorns to the ear, ſo the laughter and vain mirth of fools to the heart of a wiſe man is wholly offenſive and unſavory. Hereby ſeems likewiſe to be noted the aptneſs of vain men to be caught with every light and empty pleaſure, as fire doth ſuddenly take in thorns, and paſs thorow them, Exod. 22. 6.

V. 7. *Surely oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad*, &c.] This may be nnderſtood two different

ferent wayes: 1. That even wise men when they see innocence oppressed, and violence prevail instead of justice, or when they themselves are unrighteously oppressed, are hereby much shaken and discomposed, tempted to passion and indignation against so great disorder, Psal. 73. 2, 3, 8, 13, 21. Prov. 23. 17. Hab. 1. 2, 3, 13, 14. 2 Sam. 16. 9. and then the later clause is thus to be taken, and It, namely oppression, destroyeth the heart of a gift, (*i.*) An heart endowed and adorned with excellent gifts from above; which sense the Chaldee Paraphrase favoureth: and many times when two substantives come together, the later is taken adjectively, as Psal. 5. 6. *a man of blood (i.) a bloody man.* Psal. 140. 11. A man of tongue, (*i.*) an evil speaker. Luk. 4. 22. *words of grace (i.) gracious words.* Ephes. 4. 24. *holiness of truth, (i.) true holiness:* and in this sense likewise doth the Septuagint, and the Vulgar Latine, render this clause, ἀπολλύει τὴν καρδίαν ἀγαθὴν αὐτοῦ. *Perdet Robur Cordis Ejus.* So by *Cor muneris*, they understand *Cor munificum & liberale.*

2. Oppression, (*i.*) wealth gotten by oppression, maketh a wise man mad. When a wise man turneth oppressor, and seeth bribes and gifts come in apace, he becometh mad in greediness to get more, or mad in violence

violence againſt his poor neighbours, or mad in his underſtanding, his eye is blinded, his heart is infatuated and beſotted, he is bereft of his wonted wiſdome, ruining his family when he thinks to raiſe and to eſtabliſh it: and ſo gifts deſtroy the heart, (*i.*) his underſtanding, Hoſ. 4. 11. Deut. 16. 19. Exod. 23. 8. Either ſenſe will conſiſt well with the ſcope of the Wiſe man in the whole context, which is to perſwade unto patience againſt fretfulneſs, when oppreſſors grow rich, and run madding after gain, and to direct them to wait quietly and obſerve the end of ſuch men, (as David alſo directeth, Pſal. 37. 37, 38. & 73. 17.) and not to break forth into anger and madneſs at the preſent diſorder which we conceive to be in theſe things.

V. 8. *Better is the end of a thing, then the beginning.* &c.] This maxime holds in many things: The Beginnings are difficult and painful, the End fruitful, and rewards thoſe pains; as in the ſtudies of learning, in the wayes of vertue, in the bearing of afflictions, &c. Heb. 12. 11. on the other ſide, the beginnings of vice ſeem ſweet and pleaſant, but they end in bitterneſſe, like the role that was ſweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly, Rev. 10. 9, 10. 2 Sam. 2. 26. So in buſineſſe, a man may ſuddenly enterprize ſome great work, and glory in the conceit of his

his abilities, who after comes off with ſhame and is not able to finiſh it, for want of wiſdome to forecaſt events, Luke 13. 28—— 32. 1. Reg. 20. 11. perſeverance is that which crowns and honours an enterprize, Matth. 10. 22. Heb. 3. 6. Rev. 2. 26. Many begin in the ſpirit, who end in the fleſh, Gal. 3. 3. They uſe to ſay of the Devil, that he cannot change his feet. He can begin like a Saint, and transform himſelf into an Angel of light, but he will ſtill end like himſelf. But though this be appliable many wayes, yet here the ſcope of the Wiſe man is to arm us with moderation of ſpirit againſt the preſent and prevailing oppreſſions which we meet with. Although thou ſee much violence, and do thy ſelf ſuffer much evil thereby, yet do not deſpond, nor give over waiting upon God, do not look only on the preſent face of things, but patiently expect what iſſue he will give, go on in his way, be not diſmayed nor affrighted from any good purpoſe; many times the end is comfortable, when the beginnings are troubleſome, and they who ſowed in tears, do reap in joy, Pſ. 126. 5, 6. Pſ. 73. 17. Jam. 5: 11. Heb. 10. 36, 37. Phil. 4. 5. Iſa. 10. 12, 24, 25.

and the patient in ſpirit, then the proud in ſpirit] Long in ſpirit. That can long reſtrain and keep in anger or impatience.

This

This is frequently in Scripture attributed unto God, Exod. 34. 6. Neh. 9. 17. Pſ. 145. 8. and is the evidence of his power, Num. 14. 17, 18. Nahum. 1. 3. and ſo it is of wiſdome and ſtrength in a man. Prov. 14. 29. & 16. 32.

then the proud in ſpirit] The proper Antitheſis had been, then the haſty, or ſhort in ſpirit, as the expreſſion is, Prov. 14. 29, 17. Exod. 6. 9. But his purpoſe is to ſhew, that patience is rooted in humility; the meaner eſteem men have of themſelves, the more willing they are to endure what God inflicts, and to wait his time for an iſſue out of trouble. Whereas pride and high-mindedneſs makes men wilfull, and impatient of any oppoſition, Prov. 13. 10. Therefore when God humbled David, we find how ſtrong he was to bear the Railing and Curſing of Shimei, 2 Sam. 16. 11, 12. Hab. 2, 3, 4.

V. 9. *Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to be angry*] Do not fret at the oppreſſion and violence which thou ſeeſt in humane affairs; do not raſhly and haſtily give way to murmuring and impatience. So the Chaldee Paraphraſe underſtandeth it of contumacy and frowardneſs againſt God and his providence, when things go not as we would have them. Be not haſtily nor revengefully angry againſt rich oppreſſors, Pſal. 37. 1. Prov.

23. 17, 18. & 24. 19. Chap. 5. 2. Anger is naturally an hasty passion, and very apt to prevent reason. The Philosopher compares it to dog which barketh at a man before he observe whether it be his master or a stranger; and to an hasty messenger which runs away without his errand. And therefore slowness and deliberation is necessary to keep it in, Jam. 1. 19. Prov. 19. 11. & 15. 18. Tit. 1. 7. It being of it self very wilfull, and hasty, Gen. 49. 6. Hab. 1. 6. David was overtaken in this point in the case of Nabal, 1 Sam. 25. 21, 22. and the disciples, whom our Saviour rebuketh for it, Luke 9. 54, 55.

for anger resteth in the bosom of fools] A thing is said to be in the bosome, when it is much loved, cherished, delighted in, Deut. 13. 6. & 28. 56. Joh. 1. 18. Ruth 4. 16. fools delight in anger. It resteth. It is in his proper place, it never departeth from him, Is ever at hand, ready to enrage and enflame him. A wise man useth anger as Physick, in its proper time, but a fool useth it as his constant dyet. It is bound up in the heart of a fool, and as it were sewed and sealed up in it. It is an Inmate in a fool, it is but as a passenger through the heart of a wise man, it doth not lodge in it all night, Eph. 4. 26. therefore the Apostle exhorting unto perfect patience, directeth to us to pray for

wisdom &

wiſdome as the foundation of it, Jam. 1. 4, 5.

V. 10. *Say not thou, What is the cauſe that the former dayes were better then theſe*] He doth not forbid us with godly ſorrow, and holy zeal to bewail the corruption of the dayes wherein we live, and to be ſenſible of the ſins or judgements which make them evil; for there is no queſtion but ſome ages are worſe then others, there were purer, and then darker and corrupter times of the Church, Gen. 6. 11, 12. Amos 5. 13. Eph. 5. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 1——5. 2 Theſſ. 2. 3. Luke 18. 8.

But 1. He condemneth our aptneſs to paſs over the good things which we enjoy in our own age, and to look only on that which pincheth us, to complain of wrong, oppreſſion, injuſtice now, as if former ages had not the like reaſons or other evils, which we are freed from, to complain of as well as we. Iſrael had Gods preſence, and Manna in the Wilderneſs, and they value not that, becauſe they miſs the onions they had in Egypt, Exod. 16. 3. Num. 11. 4, 5, 6. & 14. 1——4.

2. He teacheth us not to charge the evils we lie under unto the times, but to our ſins, which make the times evil: for that is all one as if a man ſhould think he ſhould be

better, if he were removed into another chamber, or did lie on another couch. He that is wicked now, would have been ſo in the beſt of times, Matth. 23. 30. Thou can'ſt not change the world, thy work is to mend thy ſelf: a bryar is but a bryar, though it be in paradiſe; and a lilly is a lilly, though it grow in a wilderneſs.

3. According to the ſcope of the place, his principal purpoſe is, to reprove that repining diſpoſition which is in us, whereby we are apt to murmure at the providence of God, becauſe he hath given us our lot in an age of trouble, when violence haply and oppreſſion prevaileth: and ſo fooliſhly to charge God, as if humane affairs were not ballanced with ſo equal and indifferent diſtribution of bleſſings as they ought to be; do not, ſaith he, queſtion the Government of the world, nor the wiſdome and righteouſneſs of God therein; Leave Gods work unto him, to whom it belongeth to temper & order the ſeveral ages of the world in what manner it pleaſeth him. Attend thou on thine own duty, be contented with the preſent condition of the times, ſtudy how to ſerve God in thy generation, leave not thy ſtation, depart not from thy rank, afflict not thy ſelf with the things which thou can'ſt not help, walk with God, as Noah did in the worſt of times, Gen. 6. 9,

6.9. and let the badneſs of the age thou liveſt in, make thee more wiſe, more circumſpect, more humble, as fire burns hotteſt in the coldeſt weather.

otherwiſe thou doeſt not wiſely inquire concerning this matter] This is a μείωσις, the meaning is, It is a fooliſh arrogancy to complain of the providence of God, as if thou wert wiſe enough to teach him, or to mend his works, Job, 38. 2, 3. Job 21. 22.

V. 11. *Wiſdome is good with an inheritance: and by it*, &c.] This is to be underſtood comparatively, for wiſdome is good of it ſelf alone, but it is better, more uſeful and beneficial to a mans ſelf and others, when it meets with an inheritance: As the Rabbins ſay, *Bona eſt lex cum via terræ*; Wiſdome without wealth is deſpiſed, Chap. 9. 15. and wealth without wiſdome is a ſnare, a temptation, fuel of luſt, pride, vanity, luxury, oppreſſion, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Pſal. 49. 6. Prov. 28. 11. Therefore as life, expreſſed here by ſeeing of the Sun, is uncomfortable without the means and ſupports of life, an inheritance to maintain it: So an inheritance is unweildy and harmfull without wiſdome to order it. But wealth in the hand of a wiſe and good man, is an excellent inſtrument, whereby he is enabled to do much good, Iſa. 23. 18. Prov. 3. 9. Iſa. 60. 6, 9. Luke 16. 9.

1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19. Here we see, 1. It is not having of wealth, but right using of it, which makes life comfortable; for a fool may have it. 2. That wealth without wisdome to use it aright, is not good unto the owner of it. 3. That it is an especial skill and wisdome, so to manage an estate, as that it may be for good to our selves and others. 4. That wealth is a great ornament unto wisdom, Prov. 14. 24. and a great instrument unto the works thereof: Therefore they use to say, That wealth is the sinews of action 5. That it is happier for a wise man to have an inheritance, an estate derived on him from his ancestors, then to be put to get wealth by his own labour and industry: *Res non parta labore sed relicta.*

and by it there is profit to them that see the Sun] That is, by wisdome with an inheritance, there is more profit, or more excellent advantage to men in this life, then if they were separated. Or, though wisdome with an inheritance be good, yet the fruit of wisdom is more permanent, and more excellent and beneficial, then the profit of an inheritance.

V. 12. *For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence*] In the Original the words go thus, *For in the shadow of wisdom, and in the shadow of money. But the excellency of knowledge,*

knowledge, &c.] Where there is either an Ellipſis of ſome Verb, ſupplyed by the Chaldee verſion, As a man is preſerved in the ſhadow of wiſdom ſo is he preſerved in the ſhadow of money. And by others, A man reſteth, and is ſheltred againſt danger under the ſhadow of wiſdom and of money. Or elſe an Hypallage, In the ſhadow of wiſdom, that is, In wiſdom there is a ſhadow. The doubling of the prefix *Beth*, noteth the proportion of the one, and the other, in that which is in common affirmed of them; as the one is a ſhadow, ſo is the other. And ſo the vulgar Latin rendreth it, As wiſdom defendeth, ſo money defendeth. Which kind of proportion is commonly expreſſed by a double *Caph*; as Iſa. 24.2. Or laſtly, the Prepoſition ב may here from a Nominative Caſe, as Pſal 55.18. Hoſ. 13.9. and in other places, as ſome learned men have obſerved. *A ſhadow*, (*i.*) a Defence, by a Metaphor borrowed from the ſhelter, which in thoſe hot countries men received under trees from the ſcorching heat of the Sun, Job. 7.2. Iſa. 25.4. & 30.2,3. Pſal. 121.5,6. Num. 14.9. Jon. 4 6,8. Wiſdom is thus a refreſhing defence from oppreſſion and danger, Prov. 3.18. Eccl. 9.15. Act. 23. 6——9. *And money is a defence*; It will arm, it will ranſome and buy a man out of danger, Prov. 13.8. & 10.15. & 19.4.

but the excellence of wiſdom is, that wiſdome giveth life to them that have it] They both defend, and therefore both together are very profitable; but of the two, wiſdom is the moſt excellent; he meaneth ſpiritual wiſdom, joyned with the fear of God which is the beginning of it, for this giveth life, Prov. 3. 16. & 9. 11. which riches cannot do, Pſal. 39. 5, 6. & 49. 16—19. Prov. 11. 4. Rich Nabal died with ſorrow, when wiſe Abigail ſaved the life of the family, 1 Sam. 25. 33, 37, 38. Therefore wiſdom is better then wealth, Prov. 8. 11. & 16. 16. & 4. 5—10. Many times a mans wealth ſhortneth his dayes, either by his own luxurious and inordinate uſe of them, or by expoſing him to the cruelty of thieves and murtherers. But a mans wiſdom will fence him againſt ſuch dangers; or at leaſt will quiet and comfort him under them, that he ſhall not ſink nor deſpond.

V. 13. *Conſider the work of God: for who,* &c.] He ſeemeth to have preſcribed wiſdom, with an inheritance, or unqueſtionable eſtate, to be the beſt remedies againſt oppreſſion, violence, and thoſe other evils, which in a bad age we are apt to complain of. But becauſe ſuch may be the badneſs of the times, and ſo prevalent the injuries and corruptions thereof, as that neither wealth or wiſdom can defend a man againſt them: He here therefore

therefore directeth to another act of wiſdom, namely, to look above the creatures, and all ſecond cauſes, unto the righteous hand and irreſiſtible providence of God in them all; and where wiſdom cannot mend our condition, nor make the times, or the men thereof, or our affairs therein, ſo right and orderly as we would have them, there to let it, at the leaſt, teach us contentment, ſilence, & an humble acquiefcency in the good pleaſure of the Lord. Many things there are, which no humane wiſdom can rectifie. In a publick Peſtilence or Famine, no ability of man can purge the air, or open the windows of heaven to ſupply us. In a ſhipwrack, no wiſdom of man can rebuke the winds and ſeas, and command a calm. But in all ſuch caſes, wiſdom muſt teach us to ſubmit to God, and to wait upon him.

See the work of God] (*i.*) Diligently view and take notice, in the courſe of the world, of Gods over-ruling providence. The Scripture commonly uſeth words of external ſenſes, to expreſs the actions of the ſoul within, Chap. 2. 24. & 3. 10.

the work of God] Namely, his righteous government of the world; when thou art apt to complain of the times, and the oppreſſions therein, then remember, how crooked ſoever things are, it is God that

ordered and appointed all things; and it is vain for thee to think, that by thy ſollicitude or anxiety, thou canſt rectifie every thing which thou art apt to complain of; for the decrees of God are unalterable, like mountains of braſs which cannot be moved, Zach. 6. 1. 15. Therefore make that light by patience, which thou canſt not correct.

for who can make that ſtraight, which he hath made crooked?] This ſhews the unalterableneſs of Gods order, which he in his providence hath placed things in. It may be underſtood, 1. In the courſe of nature, Be not angry, nor fretfull againſt Gods work, in unſeaſonableneſs of winds or weather, in loſſes by ſea or land, in ſickneſſes and infirmities or deformities, which God bringeth upon thee or thine; nor at the miſcarriage of any means, or weakneſs of any endeavours thou uſeſt to rectifie theſe things. This ſin was the fault of Iſrael in the wildernes, they murmured at things which they could not mend, Exod. 17. 2, 3. Numb. 11. 4, 5, 6, 2 Reg. 6. 33. Jon. 4. 8, 9. 2. In Civil policy, and the managing of humane ſocieties; If thou ſee great concuſſions in States, depopulating of Countries, tranſlating of Kingdoms, plucking down and rooting up, the Sword devouring as it pleaſeth; wonder not, murmur not, but ſeriouſly

ſeriouſly conſider, that God hath an overruling providence therein, and whatever elſe diſpleaſeth thee, yet reſt ſilent and contented with what he doth, Job 9. 5—— 13. Job. 12. 14——24. Pſal. 75. 6, 7. Iſa. 2. 10——19. Dan. 2. 11. Jer. 18. 6—10. & 47. 6, 7. Ezek. 14. 17. 3. In the ſins and prevailing wickedneſs of men in any kind, when thou ſeeſt men incorrigible in wickedneſs, ſo crooked, that no means will reclaim or rectifie them; conſider the work of Gods moſt righteous judgement in hardning whom he will; and remember that God is ſo holy that he would not ſuffer ſin to prevail, if he were not alſo ſo wiſe and powerfull as to order it to his own glory, and that no wickedneſs of man ſhall proceed further, then to execute what his pre-determinate counſel had appointed, and that the remainder of it he will reſtrain, Rom. 9. 18. 1 Sam. 2. 25. Gen. 50. 20. Exod. 7. 3, 4. 2 Theſſ. 2. 11, 12. Act. 4. 28. Rom. 11. 8. Pſal. 76. 10.

V. 14. *In the day of proſperity be joyfull, but in the day of adverſity conſider*] In the day of good be thou in good. Or, be thou good; That is, joyfull, and cheerfull. The prefix ב, ſometimes denoting a Nominative Caſe, as ſome learned have obſerved.

ſerved. Or, it may note a fulneſs of joy; Be thou very joyfull: as the like phraſe ſeems to import, Exod. 32. 22. 1 Joh. 5. 19. Joh. 9. 34. Mark 5. 3, 25. Pſal. 29. 4. & 33. 4. When God gives thee proſperity, do thou enjoy it with a cheerfull and a thankfull heart.

but in the day of adverſity, or, *in the day of evil conſider*, or, *ſee*] Times of trouble and affliction are called evil dayes, Amos 5. 13. Eph. 5. 16. Eccl. 12. 1. *Conſider*; he doth not ſay, Be thou in evil, or do thou droop and languiſh under thine affliction; but conſider the righteous providence of God, behave thy ſelf wiſely, and ſutably to his viſitation; ſee from what hand it comes, to what iſſue it tends; be not fretfull; uſe not ſinfull means to extricate thy ſelf out of trouble; look on it as the work of God, which though it ſeem crooked unto thee, yet thou canſt not make ſtraight, verſ. 13. nor by murmuring, or wreſtling, mend thy ſelf. Therefore in the day of evil, ſee to thy ſelf, take heed of any undecent and unbeſeeming behaviour of heart; ſo much the word *ſeeing* ſometimes doth import, Mar. 12. 38. & 13. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 12. as alſo ſerious obſerving of what is propoſed unto us, 1 Sam. 24. 11. and accurate perpending and attendance upon it, that we may learn ſomething

thing by it. So ſhould we behave our ſelves in the time of trouble, Mic. 6. 9. Pſal. 94. 12. & 119. 71. Iſaiah 26. 11. & 42. 25.

God alſo hath ſet the one over againſt the other] Hath ſo ordered and tempered the life of man, that good and evil ſhould be, as it were, interwoven with one another, that the viciſſitude of them ſhould take of the heart, either from ſurfeiting on proſperity, or deſponding in adverſity; as God hath ſet Winter and Summer, Day and Night over againſt one another, Gen. 8. 22. Pſal. 74. 16, 17. ſo good and evil in the life of man, Lam. 3. 38. Iſa. 45. 7. that in proſperity, a man might not ſay, He ſhall never be moved; nor in adverſity, He ſhall never be delivered; but that in the one, he might learn moderation; and in the other, might exerciſe faith and hope, and might thankfully receive both good and evil at Gods hand, Job. 1. 21. & 2. 10. *Habet has vices conditio mortalium ut adverſa ex ſecundis, ex adverſis ſecunda, naſcantur.* As in a curious and well proportioned building, one ſide doth exactly anſwer unto that which is over-right it, Ezek. 40. 21. as in a balance, the weight in the one ſide, doth poiſe and anſwer to the wares in the other; ſo doth God meaſure forth good and evil in the lives of men, and proportion

portion them to one another, ſo as may be beſt fitted for humane frailty, and moſt conduce unto the ſpiritual good of his ſervants, 1 Cor. 10. 13. Pſal. 90. 15. & 103. 9, 14. 2 Cor. 1. 4, 5, 9, 10. Iſa. 57. 16——18.

to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him] Or, To the end, that man ſhould not be able to find out, or to foreſee any thing that is to befall him afterwards; that it being impoſſible for him, by his providence or prudence, to prevent that order and viciſſitude of events, which God hath foreordained, he may thereupon reſolve patiently to ſubmit to the will of the Lord, (which muſt obtain notwithſtanding all our unquietneſs) and to adore the wiſdome and goodneſs of God, who as he doth by his Soveraign authority, whatſoever it pleaſeth both in heaven and earth, ſo doth he by his admirable wiſdome, and Fatherly goodneſs, ſo diſpoſe of things, and ſo temper them together for the good of his ſervants, that none, who comes after him, can mend his work, be able to order things better to his own advantage then God hath done; and hereupon ſince no man can find out any thing ſuperfluous, any thing defective, any thing irregular in the work of God, any thing which if he had been, conſulted,

conſulted, might have been better done; every man therefore ought to take heed of fretting or complaining, or finding fault with the providence of God towards him, and believe, that what the Lord doth, is beſt done, and accordingly acquieſce in it, and with ſilence and ſubmiſſion yield unto it, 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 25, 26. & 16. 10. Pſ. 39. 9. Acts 11. 17, 18. Iſa. 39. 8. Rom. 8. 28. Job 9. 22. 13, 14, 15, 32. Mic. 7. 9. Lam. 3. 26—39. Job 40. 4.

V. 15. *All things have I ſeen in the daies of my vanity*, &c.] He confirmeth the former doctrine of Gods dark and wonderful providence, by his own obſervation and experience. All theſe things have I obſerved in my vain and ſhort life, Chap. 6. 12.

there is a juſt man that periſheth in his righteouſneſs] Is oppreſſed and ruined, being innocent; or, for his righteouſneſs; as Naboth, 1 Reg. 21. Hab. 1. 13. *In*, ſometimes is as much as *for*; as Gen. 29. 18. Hoſ. 12. 13. Gen. 18. 28. Jon. 1. 14. Matth. 6. 7. Act 7. 29.

and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life] Lives impunely in a wicked way without controul, and that many times, becauſe he is wicked, Job 21. 7. Jer. 12. 1, 2. The Lord hereby teaching us, that there is a day to come wherein he hath appointed to judge

judge the world in righteousnes, called the day of the revelation of his righteous judgements, Acts 17. 31. Rom. 2. 5. He is most just and righteous now in all his waies of providence, but many times in them he hideth himself, Isa. 45. 15. that he may exercise the faith and patience of his servants, and that the perdition of wicked men at the last, may by his long suffering and patience towards them, be the more conspicuous.

V. 16. *Be not righteous over much*] Some would have this spoken in the name, and according to the judgement of carnal Reason, as a politick precept unto neutrality and indifferency in good courses, seeing piety and righteousnes doth so often expose men unto danger, be not therefore over-forward and religious, over-wise and scrupulous; be not so inflexible upon grounds of conscience, remit a little of thy strictnes, and accommodate thy self to the exigence of times and circumstances, slacken thy hand, strike sail, loosen the rudder bonds in a tempest. Why shouldest thou unnecessarily expose thy self unto danger? But I rather conceive that the name of the mean is here given to the extreme, for a man may many times do a thing conscientiously, and upon an opinion of duty, and thereby involve himself in much trouble and danger, when indeed there was no

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neceſſity ſo to do. 1 Sam. 15. 21. 2 Sam. 21. 1, 2. Joh. 13. 8. Rom. 10. 2, 3. Phil. 3. 6. Act. 26. 9. Joh. 16. 2. Col. 2. 18. 1 Tim. 5. 23. and in this ſenſe the meaning is, *be not righteous over-much*, be not too much bent on a thing, juſt in thine own opinion, but temper thy zeal with godly wiſdome, adviſe with others, lean not on thine own underſtanding; make not thy ſelf over-wiſe, as if thine own private judgement were ground enough to regulate all thy behaviours by, flatter not thy ſelf in any opinionative confidence of thine own ability to judge of all that is fit to be done, but think ſoberly of thy ſelf, Rom. 12. 3. The more humble thou art, the more wary and circumſpect thou wilt be, and the more wary, the more ſafe. Some apply this againſt too much rigor and ſeverity in cenſuring of men for unjuſt, when we ſee them periſh, or for righteous when we ſee them proſper, grounded upon the doctrine of the former verſe. But I rather take it for a Caution and direction to moderate our zeal with prudence, leaſt it bring upon us the fore-mentioned danger, Matth. 10. 16. It was the commendation of Agricola in Tacitus, *Retinuit, quod eſt difficillimum, ex ſapientia modum. Quiſquis plus juſto non ſapit, ille ſapit.*

V. 17. *Be not over-much wicked, neither be*

be thou foolish, &c.] Though there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedneſs, do not thou thereupon take courage to let looſe the reins to all luſt, or to make the impunity of others an encouragement to any exceſs of wickedneſs in thy ſelf, for this is folly and madneſs to run againſt a rock, becauſe ſome one or other hath eſcaped ſhipwrack. He doth not here allow any degree of wickedneſs, but becauſe in many things we ſin all, and no man by his greateſt vigilancy can preſerve himſelf wholly from miſcarriage, therefore he warneth us to beware above all, of breaking forth into preſumptuous ſins, and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, Jam. 1. 21. Exceſs and profuſeneſs of evil, 1 Pet. 4. 3. greedineſs of luſt, Eph. 4. 19. Jer. 6, 7. & 2 23, 24. & 8. 6. Hoſ. 4. 2. Mic. 7. 3.

why ſhouldeſt thou dye before thy time?] why ſhouldeſt thou by exceſs of ſin conſume thy body, waſte thy ſtrength, caſt thy ſelf into the danger of civil juſtice, or under the curſe threatned againſt deſperate ſinners, Pſ. 55. 23. Prov. 10. 27. Job. 15. 32.

V. 18. *It is good that thou ſhouldeſt take hold of this*, &c.] Take hold, that is, firmly and conſtantly keep to it, and never let it go, Iſa. 56. 4. Job 17. 9. Prov. 4 13.

of this] Meaning either that which he ſpeaks

ſpeaks of in the preſent verſe, the fear of God, whereby the heart will be preſerved from vitious and imprudent extremes, and the dangers enſuing thereupon. Or elſe, the mediocrity he before ſpake of, it is good that thou hold faſt this counſel, to follow the middle and ſafe way, ſincerely keeping unto duty, and yet wiſely declining danger, and then the clauſes [of this] and [from this] muſt relate unto the two former precepts, it is good that thou take hold of this, namely, that thou be not over-much wicked, and withal that thou with-draw not thine hand from that, namely, that thou be not righteous over-much.

for he that feareth God ſhall come forth of them all] Of all thoſe dangers, which extremes are likely to draw men into. He that ordereth his waies in the fear of God, turneth aſide neither to the right hand, nor to the left, but doth obſerve one precept, as that he departeth not from another, ſhall thereby be preſerved from the dangers which lye on either hand, Pſ. 34. 9——16. ſhall have comfort in trouble, and deliverance out of it; for *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdome*, he doth teach them how they may walk without offence, Pſ. 25. 12, 14. Job 22. 28. Pſ. 32. 7, 8.

V. 19. *Wiſdome ſtrengtheneth the wiſe,*

more

more than ten mighty men that are in the City] By wiſdome he meaneth that wiſdome which he adviſed in the three preceding verſes, that fear of God, whereby men are taught to keep an holy moderation, and to avoid all unneceſſary and imprudent extremes in evil times, this wiſdome will keep a man from the dangers mentioned verſ. 15. more than ten, that is, many mighty men, or principal commanders can preſerve a city. A godly man, who hath God for his friend, and his Angels pitching their tents about him, is thereby much ſafer from dangers, than a city is by the power of many Dynaſtæ or Potentates, who are intruſted with the defence of it, 2 Reg. 6. 16. Eccleſ. 9. 16. Iſa. 8, 10. 2 Sam. 20. 16——22. Prov. 24. 3, 4, 5. Zach. 2. 5. Pſ. 34 7. Prov. 3. 21——26. & 4. 12, 13.

V. 20. *for there is not a juſt man upon earth, that doeth good, and ſinneth not*] Though ſome conceive theſe words to have no relation or connexion to the words going before, or following after, yet they ſeem to have a very fair aſpect both waies. 1. To the former words; there is no man ſo juſt, but he will ſometimes be overtaken with ſin, which will eaſily expoſe him unto danger, if he have not ſpiritual wiſdome to behave himſelf, in a fair accommodation towards other. 2. To the following words, there is no man

ſo

ſo juſt, who doth not ſometimes fall into ſin, and therefore he ought to bear with the errors and failings of others. The common corruption of the beſt men requireth of them, both wiſdome toward themſelves to prevent danger, and charity towards their brethren to forgive offences: wiſdome towards themſelves, that they give not occaſion to any to reproach and ſpeak evil of the waies of God, Col. 4.5,6. 1 Theſſ. 4. 11, 12. Eph. 5.13, 16. 2 Cor. 11. 12. 1 Pet. 2.12. 15,16. Charity towards others, when they are overtaken with a fault, as conſidering themſelves, who are without Gods continued aſſiſtance, equally obnoxious to the ſame miſcarriages, Gal. 6. 1. Col. 3. 13.

not a juſt man upon earth] For the Saints in heaven are made perfect, they ſin no more, Heb. 12. 23. The words in their abſolute ſenſe are a full teſtimony of the imperfection of our inherent Righteouſneſs in this Life, and that even juſtified perſons come very ſhort of that exact and perfect obedience which the Law requireth, Pſ. 103. 3, 4. & 143. 2. 1 Reg. 8. 46. Iſa. 64. 6. Prov. 20. 9. 1 Joh. 1. 8, 10. Rom. 7. 14—23.

V. 21. *Alſo take no heed unto all words that are ſpoken, leſt thou hear thy ſervant curſe thee.*] Set not thine heart upon all words that men ſpeak, or all things that they do

do unto thee: ſet not thine heart overcurioufly to know them: when thou doſt know them, lay them not to heart, be not troubled at them, do not ſet thy ſelf to revenge them, let them not diſquiet thy mind, ſee them, and ſee them not, 1 Sam. 9. 20. 2 Sam. 13. 20. 1 Sam. 25. 25. & 1 Sam. 10. 27. Prov. 19. 11. & 20. 3. It is a great point of wiſdome to diſſemble injuries, to connive at them, to take no notice of them, to paſs them by with meekneſs and neglect, 2 Sam. 16. 10, 11. This meekneſs he requireth to be ſhewed even towards mean and abject perſons, or towards the pooreſt ſervant in a mans family, who doth ſometimes, it may be, through our own provocation, utter ſome hard and undutiful ſpeeches againſt us, Joh. 31. 13, 14.

V. 22. *for oftentimes alſo thine own heart knoweth, that thou thy ſelf likewiſe haſt curſed others*] The order of the words ſeems to be inverted; for the meaning is, thou art conſcious to thy ſelf that thou haſt oftentimes curſed or ſpoken evil of others. The conſideration of our own frequent paſſions and infirmities ſhould move us patiently to ſuffer, and willingly to pardon the overſights of our brethren, Gal. 6. 1. Tit. 3. 3. Jam. 3. 1, 2. Matth. 7. 1——5. The more ſenſible any man is of ſin in himſelf, the more

meek

meek and charitable he will be towards others. Pride is the ground of contention and cenſorioufneſs, Prov. 13. 10.

V. 23. *All this have I proved by wiſdome: I ſaid I will be wiſe, but it was far from me.*] He profeſſeth the truth of all which he had before taught, that wiſdome is an excellent protection to a righteous man againſt his own corruptions, and dangers enſuing thereupon, and confirmeth it by his own experience and tryal, according to that great wiſdome which God had given him. Yet withal, he acknowledgeth how ſhort he came of that perfection in wiſdome, which he promiſed himſelf by the diligent uſe of means to attain unto. Profeſſing the great difficulty he found therein: 1. He was endued with the Spirit of God, and with his fear, which is ever accompanied with ſpiritual wiſdome, Pſ. 119. 99, 100. 2. He had a perſonal and extraordinary promiſe of wiſdome above any other men, 1 Reg. 3. 12. 3. He had uſed all the means to increaſe this excellent grace of God in himſelf; 1. He did very highly prize it, Prov. 3. 13——26. & 8. 11, 12. 2. He had the benefit of a Religious education, and his fathers inſtructions to quicken him in it, Prov. 4. 4——13. 3. He ſet his heart wholly upon it, that according to the property of wiſe men, he

might be yet wiſer, and get more knowledge, Prov. 9. 9. & 10. 14. Eccleſ. 1. 13. 4. He prayed earneſtly unto God for it, (which is an excellent means to get wiſdome, Jam. 1. 5. Eph. 1. 17. Col. 1. 9.) 2 Chron. 1. 10. 5. He had humility, and a due ſenſe of his want of wiſdome, (which alſo is a fit diſpoſition of heart to be taught of God, 1 Cor. 3. 18. & 8. 2. Pſ. 25. 9. Matth. 11. 25.) 1 Reg. 3. 7. 6. He had all outward furtherances and accommodations towards the getting of it, wealth, peace, power, authority, to call in all the aſſiſtances which might be uſeful unto him in it, Eccleſ. 2. 9, 10. 7. He had an extraordinary ſtock of infuſed wiſdome to begin withal, which he greatly improved by long and accurate experience, 1 Reg. 4. 30. Eccleſ. 1. 16. And yet after all this he profeſſeth, That though he ſaid he would be wiſe, Though the purpoſe of his heart was wholly ſet upon it, yet he found that it was far from him. Teaching us thereby, 1. The unſearchable deepneſs and diſtance of wiſdome in its whole wideneſs from the nobleſt and moſt ſublime underſtanding of man, Job 28. 12——21. & 37. 15——23. & 38. *per totum*. Rom. 11. 33, 34. 2. That the moſt perfect Saints are the moſt ſenſible of their imperfection; as the more delicate the ſenſes are, the more

ſharply

ſharply are they affected with what offends them, Rom. 7. 14——24. & 12. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. & 13. 9, 10. 3. That it is the nature of ſpiritual wiſdome to diſcover ſpiritual wants, and the more the ſoul knows of God, the greater doth it diſcern and bewail its diſtance from him; as things neereſt the Center make more haſte unto it, Exod. 33. 11, 18.

V. 24. *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?*] Or, *that which hath been, is far off, and exceeding deep:* the word is doubled, to note the ſuperlative degree, as Prov. 20. 14. He ſheweth the cauſe why he was far from wiſdome, becauſe the works of God, whether of Creation, Redemption, or Providence, are very profound, abſtruſe, and myſterious, greatly diſtant from the eye, and beyond the comprehenſion of the weak and narrow reaſon of man, Prov. 2. 4. Job 11. 6——10. Pſ. 139. 6.

V. 25. *I applyed mine heart to know, and to ſearch, and to ſeek out wiſdome,* &c.] Or, *I and my heart turned every way, left no means unattempted, exactly to diſcover wiſdome,* &c. The uſing of many words unto one purpoſe, implyes the exquiſite and curious ſearch which Solomon made in this inquiry; as Deut. 13. 14. See Chap. 1. 13, 17.

& 2. 3, 12. Solomon was not ſo much diſcouraged by the difficulty, as provoked by the excellency of wiſdome, and made no other uſe of the profoundneſs and abſtruſeneſs thereof, than to multiply his endeavours in ſearching after it.

to ſeek out wiſdome and the reaſon of things] The curious art and ſubtil contrivances of things: the ſame word is uſed, verſ. 27, 29. Chap. 9. 10. 2 Chron. 26. 15. whereby we are taught in the diſquiſition of knowledge, eſpecially that which is ſpiritual, not to content our ſelves with a ſuperficial ſhew, but to get rooted and grounded principles, that we may be able with full aſſurance to give a reaſon of the hope which is in us, 1 Pet. 3. 15. and to have a diſtinct comprehenſion of the truth, that we may be rooted and fixed on it, Eph. 3. 16, 17, 18. & 4. 14. and give a clear and deliberate Judgement upon it.

I, and my heart] That is, I did heartily and ſeriouſly ſeek out. The copulative Vau, doth either import a prepoſition, I with my heart did ſearch, as 1 Sam. 14. 19. or a more clear explication; I, that is, my heart: ſo the learned conceive that copula many times to ſignifie as much as, That is, as Gen. 35. 21. 1 Chron. 21. 12. 2 Sam. 17. 12. 1 Sam. 17. 40. & 28. 3.

An

And to know the wickedneſs of folly, even of fooliſhneſs and madneſs] Or, the fooliſhneſs of madneſs: as the Apoſtles expreſſion is ἁμαρτωλὸς ἁμαρτία, a ſinning ſin, Rom. 7. 13. ſo here the Wiſe man expreſſeth the deſperate wickedneſs and folly of corrupt hearts: by wickedneſs of folly, and fooliſhneſs of madneſs, thereby ſignifying the vaſt and deep corruption and deceit which is in the heart of man. The knowledge whereof he did ſearch after, that he might be the better able to convince and to diſſect the conſciences of others, 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. Heb. 4. 12. Ezek. 14. 5. Iſa. 49. 2. Pſ. 45. 5. Rev. 1. 16. only his ſtudy is in this order, firſt he ſearcheth and ſeeketh out wiſdome, as an antidote againſt the danger of his ſecond ſtudies, to diſcover the wickedneſs, folly, and madneſs of ſenſual pleaſures. And therefore we ſhall obſerve, that in the particular wickedneſs which he ſpecifieth in the next verſe, namely, the inticements of a whoriſh woman, he doth often premiſe the Commendations of wiſdome, and the ſtudy of that, as an effectual prevention of that miſchief, Prov. 2. 10——19. & 5. 1, 2, 3. & 6. 6, 20——24. Prov. 7. 4, 5. & 9. 10——13.

V. 26. *And I find more bitter than Death the woman whoſe heart is ſnares and nets,*

&c.] He sheweth the discovery which he had made by his study to find out the wickedness of folly, and foolishness of madness, by instancing in one particular vanity of the wiles and subtilties of harlots, which it was necessary for him to add to the former catalogue of vanities, that he might give to the Church then, and leave a record for all posterity to take notice of his special Repentance for those gross miscarriages which by that means he had been drawn into. And here he gives, 1. The Character of an whorish woman, described, 1. By her subtilty. Her heart is snares and nets, her cunning devices to deceive and intangle sensual persons, are as gins laid to catch silly creatures, who are entised with the bait, but discern not the danger, See Prov. 2. 16. & 6. 24, 26. & 7. 5. & 9. 16, 17. & 22. 14. 2. By her power, her hands, wherewith she catcheth, holdeth, embraceth him, are as strong cords to hale simple fools as an oxe to the slaughter, Prov. 7. 23, 21, 22. Judg. 16. 15——19. 2. Here is the great danger of these nets and bands to the souls of men.

They are more bitter than death] More pernitious, and bring more heavy miseries with them. We read of the bitterness of death, 1 Sam. 15. 32. and of a worse bitterness, the end of a strange woman *is bitter as*

worm-

wormwood, and *her ſteps take hold on hell*, Prov. 5. 4, 5. Death may be ſweetned and ſanctified, made a welcome and deſirable thing to a believer, 1 Cor. 15. 55. Phil. 1. 23. Luke 2. 29, 30. But the bitterneſs of hell is incurable; death may be honourable, to dye in a good cauſe, in a good old age, to go to the grave in peace, lamented, deſired, with the ſweet ſavour of an holy life, and many good works to follow one, Rev. 14. 13. Phil. 1. 21. Pſ. 116. 16. But to conſume and putrifie alive, under a *Tabes* of impure luſts, to periſh, as Tiberius did at Capreæ, *quotidie perire me ſentio*, to ſhipwrack a mans honour, ruine his eſtate, ſhorten his years, conſume his fleſh, put a hell into his conſcience, to bury his name, his ſubſtance, his ſoul, his carkaſs, in the boſome of an Harlot; this is a bitterneſs beyond that of death, Prov. 5. 9, 10, 11. & 6. 26, 33. & 9. 16, 17, 18.

who ſo pleaſeth God, ſhall eſcape from her, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her] Here is intimated the great wrath of God againſt this ſin. It is a ſin which he uſeth to give over reprobates, and thoſe whom he in ſpecial manner hateth, unto; a ſin which few repent of, to take hold of the paths of life again, Prov. 2. 19. & 22. 14. Amos 7. 17. Rom. 1. 24——28. Eph. 4. 18, 19. A man is not

preſerved from the power of this temptation by his own wiſdome or ſtrength, but only by the ſupernatural grace of God.

V. 27. 28. *Behold, this I have found, (ſaith the Preacher,)* &c.] This, which he had ſpoken of, verſ. 26. or which followeth, verſ. 28.

ſaith the Preacher] This added, 1. To give credit from his wiſdome and experience to what he here affirms: eſpecially having made ſo diſtinct and accurate an inquiry, weighing and comparing one by one, to find out the account, and to come to a determinate and clear judgement in the caſe, and to make a certain concluſion. 2. To teſtifie to the Church his repentance. This have I found, ſaith the ſoul, which, by ſound repentance, is returned unto the Congregation of Saints, which was before enſnared in the nets and bands of ſeducing women, and that upon ſerious & ſad recollected thoughts, which he hath not yet given over, but doth inſiſt upon the ſame penitent inquiry ſtill.

one man amongſt a thouſand have I found, but a woman amongſt all thoſe have I not found] The meaning is not to condemn one ſexe rather than the other; *for all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God*, Rom. 3. 23.) and Solomon had known good and wiſe women, as well as men, Prov. 18. 22. &

22. & 19. 14. Prov. 12. 4. & 31. 10——30. But he ſpeaketh here of his obſervation, according to his former ſenſual converſation with wanton women, which ſeems to be the reaſon of the number here mentioned: for Solomon had a thouſand wives and concubines, all ſtrange women of the neighbour wicked nations, which turned away his heart from the Lord unto idols. Amongſt all theſe thouſand, Solomon had not found one good one, 1 Reg. 11. 1——9 Or the ſubtil counſels of one man, amongſt many, may more eaſily be diſcerned, than of any harlot, becauſe their flatteries and dalliances do ſteal away the heart, and put out the eyes and judgement, and infatuate a man ſo, that he can look no further than the preſent delights wherewith they do bewitch him, Hoſ. 4. 11. Judg. 16. 17——21. Prov. 7. 21, 22. & 5. 6.

V. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have ſought out many inventions,*] *This only:* He could not diſcover all the ſtreams of wickedneſs and folly amongſt men: but the original and fountain of them all he doth diſcover, namely, the corruption of the heart of man by the fall; this he found, that their wickedneſs was not from God, nor by creation, but from themſelves, and their willing

entertainment of the temptation of the ſerpent. Some more ſubtilly expound theſe words, as a confirmation of the former: God made Adam Right, and ſo he continued ſo long as he was alone: but when the Woman was given unto him, ſhe tempted him, and then they ſought out many inventions. *Becauſe the woman was firſt in the tranſgreſſion*, 1 Tim.2.14. But here he ſpeaketh of both Sexes together under the name of man, and ſheweth, that they were made without any of this ſinful and ſubtle wiſdom, after the Image of God, endowed with divine wiſdom to diſcern the way unto true happineſs, and with perfect ability to purſue the ſame, Gen. 1.26. Col.3.10. But though he were made upright, yet he was as a creature, mutable, & ſo ſubject to be overcome by temptation, and accordingly he did eaſily admit of the temptation of Satan, and ſought out many inventions of his own, did not content himſelf with that way to happineſſe which God had preſcribed, but fancied to himſelf an higher perfection, and yielded to follovv thoſe new vvayes unto bleſſedneſs, vvhich Satan and his own deceived heart, did ſuggeſt unto him, and ſo fell from his primitive honour, and became like the Beaſts that periſh, and contracted a bottomleſs and unſearchable depth of ſinful deceit, which none but God can throughly

throughly ſearch and diſcover, Jer. 17. 9. Iſa. 57. 10. Jer. 2. 23, 24. & 32. 22. By *many inventions*, he meaneth all theſe vain, though crooked counſels, and carnal ſhifts wherewith men do pacifie, palliate, excuſe, defend all their ſinful courſes, Pſal. 119. 133. Rom. 1. 21. 2 Cor. 10. 5. Gen. 6. 5. Ludovicus *De Dieu* tranſlateth the words thus, *Ipſi autem quæſierunt cogitationes Magnatum*, They ſought out the inventions of mighty men, or of the Angels, who were not contented with their own ſtation, but forſook it, Jud. v. 6. and ſo relateth to the temptation of the Serpent, Ye ſhall be like unto Gods, you ſhall be advanced into a nobler and more honourable condition, then now you are in, Gen. 3. 5. theſe thoughts, being ſuggeſted by Satan, they ambitiouſly entertained, and ſo fell from their primitive perfection.

CHAP. VIII.

THe wiſe man proceedeth in this Chapter, to give further precepts touching tranquillity of life. And they are, 1. Practical prudence with the fear of God, which ſtamp a kind of majeſty and luſtre on the face of a man, and make him to be had in reve-

rence of others, verſ. 1. 2. Obedience to Magiſtrates, without haſtily attempting, or obſtinately perſiſting in any rebellious deſign it being in their power, as they pleaſe, to avenge themſelves upon us, verſ. 2. 3, 4, 5. 3. Preparedneſſe of heart to bear inevitable evils, by a prudent obſervation of times, and judging of what is in a concurrence, of ſuch and ſuch circumſtances fitteſt to be done, and where things are dark and undiſcernable, to diſpoſe our hearts quietly to yield to the providence of God, verſ. 6, 7, 8. 4. Becauſe it is a very great temptation unto diſquietneſſe and impatiency of ſpirit, when a man liveth under wicked Rulers, againſt whoſe cruelty all a mans wiſdome and meekneſſe can hardly be ſecurity enough: He therefore, 1. obſerveth the providence of God in this particular, verſ. 9, 10. 2. the reaſon of that inſolence and exceſs of evil in the lives of ſuch men, verſ. 11. 3. the grounds of comfort unto good men in this temptation and of terrours and reſtraint upon evil men, notwithſtanding their preſent power and proſperity, verſ. 12. 13. Laying down a general propoſition concerning Gods providence in the affairs of this life, whereunto good men ſhould ſubmit. verſ. 14. 5.

A cheerfull enjoyment of outward and preſent

sent blessings, without anxious sollicitude for the future, vers. 15. 6. A patient resting in the providence of God, admiring his works, and adoring the unsearchableness of his counsels; whose judgements, though they may be secret, yet they cannot be unrighteous, vers. 16, 17.

Vers. 1. W*Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?*] He had set his heart to seek out wisdome and folly, Chap. 7. 25. And having there handled the later of these two, as the use of the Scripture many times is, when two members or branches of a subject are proposed, to handle the later first, and then to resume the former. *Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*, Psal. 133. 1. Pleasant as the pretious oyntment of Aaron, vers. 2. Good and profitable, as the dew of Hermon, vers. 3. Isa. 56. 3, 4, 6.) he doth here return to the former member, shewing the excellency of wisdome, whereunto no other is to be compared. The prefix *Caph* may be understood, either as a note of similitude, *Who is as the wise man?* (*i.*) None is to be compared to him: And so it may be understood as spoken of himself, Who hath attained a greater measure

measure of wisdome then I have? who yet with my utmost studies have not been able to finde out the perfection of it, Chap. 7. 23, 24. Or it may be taken *pro nota veritatis*, and so the sense to be, that no man can attain unto perfect wisdome, as vers. 16, 17.

and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?] Here are two sorts of wise men noted unto us, 1. He that is wise in himself: 2. He that is able to teach others wisdom. Or, who is able truly to judg of all affairs, and rightly to discern what in every case is to be done, or left undone? Dan. 2. 4, 5, 7. & 4. 3. 16.

a mans Wisdome maketh his face to shine] This seemeth to allude to the brightnesse of Moses his face, Exod. 34. 29, 30, 34. the like whereunto we read of Stephen. Acts 6. 15. Hereby is noted, 1. That wisdom doth beautifie a man with tranquillity of mind, and cheerfulnesse of countenance, *spem fronte serenat*, Psal. 4. 6, 6. Prov. 15. 13. & 16. 24. Psal. 34. 5. 2. That it maketh his light of holinesse to shine out unto others, Matth. 5. 16. Joh. 5. 35. Phil. 2. 15. 3. That it rendreth him reverend, venerable, amiable in the eyes of others, and doth conciliate special honour and favour unto him, in the hearts of those that converse with him,

Job

Job 29. 7——16. 4. That it inlightneth his eyes, that he may more clearly underſtand what he is to do, and to leave undone; the light of the Lord ſhineth on his wayes, Pſal. 25. 9. Job 22. 28. Pſal. 32. 8. 1 Joh. 2, 20.

and the boldneſſe, or, *ſtrength of his face ſhall be changed*, or, *doubled*] By the ſtrength of the face, we may underſtand fierceneſſe, Impudence, ſourneſs, auſterity; as Dan. 8. 23. Deut. 28. 50. Prov. 7. 13. & 21. 29. Iſa. 3. 9. Pſal. 10. 4. Jer. 4. 3. wiſdome changeth all this into mildneſſe, meekneſſe, and ſereneneſſe of countenance; as Moſes was the wiſeſt and holieſt, ſo he was the meekeſt man, Numb. 12. 3. Prov. 11, 2. 2. By ſtrength of face, we may underſtand confidence and courage; For the righteous is bold as a Lion, Prov. 28. 1. Guilt and ſhame caſt down the countenance, Gen. 4. 5, 6. Righteouſneſſe and wiſdom embolden it, 1 Sam. 1. 18. Job 11. 15. Luk. 21. 28. And in this ſenſe, ſome read the text thus, (which the Original word well bears) The ſtrength of his countenance, his confidence and courage ſhall be doubled, Chap. 9. 19. Iſa. 40. 31. Prov. 4. 18.

V. 2. *I counſel thee to keep the kings commandement, and that in regard of the oath of God*] *I to keep.* There is in the Original an Ellipſis,

Ellipſis, and ſomething neceſſarily to be ſupplyed, as is uſual in other places, Pſal. 120.7. Hoſ.14.8. 2 Cor.9.6. Matth.25.9. 2 Theſſ.2.3. 1 Tim.4.3.Gen.25.22.Matth. 21.30. I, if thou wilt admit of my counſel or perſwaſion, thus adviſe thee. It is put Elliptically,to intimate a ſpecial Emphaſis, and to give authority to the precept, Gal. 5.2.

To keep the Kings command] To obſerve the mouth of the King. The Angels are ſaid to ſee, or obſerve the face of God, in token of obedience and readineſs to execute his commands, Matth. 18.10. Eſth. 1, 14, 1 Reg.10.8. The mouth is often uſed for the command, which proceedeth from it, Exod.38.21. Numb.4,27. Joſh.1.18. Our obedience muſt not be according to our own fancies or conjectures, but according unto the preſcript of the Law, for the Law is the mouth of the Magiſtrate. This is one ſpecial part of prudence, in order unto tranquillity of life, to be faithful and obedient towards Magiſtrates, and not to make our ſelves wiſer then the Law.

and that in regard of the oath of God] Theſe words are both an enforcement, and a limitation of the duty preſcribed;

1. An enforcement: It is neceſſary to yield obedience unto Magiſtrates, not onely out

out of fear towards them, becauſe of their ſword, but out of conſcience towards God, and becauſe of his vowes that are upon us, Rom. 13. 5. and ſo it ſeems to relate unto ſome covenant and oath of fidelity, which was taken by them towards their Princes. We read of the covenant between the king and the people made before the Lord, 1 Chr. 11. 3. and a promiſe or league made in the preſence of God, was likely to be by the intervention of an oath, as the covenant between Abimelech and Abraham, Gen. 21. 23, 24. See Gen. 26. 28, 29. & 31. 44, 53. And this may ſeem to be intimated in that phraſe of Giving the hand under Solomon; which we render, By ſubmitting themſelves unto him, 1 Chron. 29. 24. A like Ceremony, whereunto Abrahams ſervant uſed, when he ſware faithfulneſs unto him, Gen. 24. 2, 3. & 47. 29. So giving the hand, was a ceremonial confirmation of ſome ſworn covenant or promiſe, Ezra 10. 19. Ezek. 17. 18, χεῖρας τ' ἀλλήλων λαβέτην, καὶ πιστώσαντο, Iliad. 2. And hence ſome here by *Juramentum Elohim*, underſtand the Oath of the Magiſtrates, who are ſometimes in Scripture ſo called, Exod. 22. 28. Pſal. 82. 1, 6. Joſh. 10. 34. Thereby to teach them to rule for God, not by their own luſt, but by his Law, and for the good of his people. But I rather underſtand, by the Oath.

Oath of God, an oath ſworn unto God, Iſa. 19.18.& 44.4. 2 Chron. 15.12,14. & 34. 31,32. So that we are bound to be obedient unto Magiſtrates for the Lords ſake, 1 Pet. 2. 13——17. as ſervants are required upon the ſame accompt, to yield obedience to their maſters, Eph. 6.5——8.

2. This clauſe containeth a limitation, by which our obedience unto men is to be bounded: *Keep the Kings Command*; yet ſo, that thou do not violate thine oath and obedience due unto God. Thy ſervice to the one, muſt be ſuch as will conſiſt with the fealty to the other; for we are bound unto God and his ſervice by oath and covenant, 1 Pet. 3.21. Neh. 9.38.& 10.29. Pſal. 119. 106. and no ſubordinate obedience to others muſt make us forget our duty unto him, 1 Sam. 19.1. & 22.17. Dan. 3.16, 17, 18. Act. 4.19. & 5.20. 1 Pet. 2.17. Prov. 24. 21. 1 Reg. 21. 3. Eſth. 3.2. 1 Sam. 14. 45.

V. 3. *Be not haſty to go out of his ſight*, &c.] Or, *Go not haſtily out of his ſight*. When two Verbs finite come together, either the later is to be taken infinitively; as Deut. 2.31. Eſth. 8.6. Pſal. 102.13. or the former adverbially; as Gen. 24,18. 1 Sam. 4.14. Hoſ. 9.9.

Be not haſty to go] It ſignifies ſuch haſte, as ariſeth out of terrour and perturbation of ſpirit, in which ſenſe the word is frequently taken, Exod. 15. 15. 2 Sam. 4. 1. Job 23. 15. He ſheweth the root of Rebellion, namely, impatience, fear, perturbation of ſpirit, whereby men fling off from their Allegiance. Servants are ſaid to ſtand in the preſence of their Lords, 1 Reg. 10. 8. Eſth. 1. 4. So that haſting out of their preſence, implies, a declining and caſting off of obedience, Jon. 1. 3. 1 Reg. 12. 16. This is one part of obedience here forbidden, haſtineſs in taking offence, diſcovering of choler and diſcontent, flying away in paſſion, either from the preſence or from the Commands, or from the anger of a King; not remembring that Kings have many eyes, & can ſee at a great diſtance, and long arms, and can eaſily reach thoſe that flye in diſcontent from them. Obedience, innocence, calmneſs of ſpirit, a meek and yielding diſpoſition, may ſecure and reconcile a man, (for a ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath) when turbulency and unquietneſs will but plunge him into greater diſfavour and danger. Another and worſer Errour, is wilfully to perſiſt in diſobedience, and to boyl up the former paſſion into habitual ſtubbornneſs.

Do not thou ſtand in an evil thing] If thou have been tranſported with perturbation, and gone out of the way, cool and draw back betime; do not harden thy ſelf in thy defection, but labour, by forbearance and mildneſſe, to recover his favour again, Prov. 15.1. & 25.15. & 30, 32. To ſtand in a thing, is to have a fixed and unmoved reſolution upon it, 1 Cor. 7. 37. Epheſ. 6. 11, 13, 14.

for he doth whatſoever pleaſeth him] This is not ſpoken to confirm, or give allowance unto any revengefull and cruel Actions of Princes, as if their power did ſerve to execute their own luſts; but he ſheweth, beſides the ſinfulneſs of it, how unſafe, and how fruitleſs it is to reſiſt thoſe, who have power to do what they pleaſe, and who being injured and provoked, can eaſily break in pieces thoſe who riſe up againſt them.

V. 4. *Where the word of a King is, there is power: and who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou?*] Think not that thou ſhalt be able to eſcape the wrath of a King: for if he but ſpeak the word, he hath power enough to reach thee where ever thou goeſt: Where ever the Command of a King comes, it is accompanied with power enough to be avenged

ged on any that provoke him. He never wants inſtruments to execute his diſpleaſure. When Saul pronounced death upon the Prieſts, there wanted not a Doeg to ſet upon them, 1 Sam. 22. 18. Dan. 5. 19.

and who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou?] This elſewhere ſpoken of God, who worketh all things by the counſel of his own Will, and doth whatſoever he pleaſeth both in heaven and earth, Job 9. 12. But of Princes and Magiſtrates it cannot be abſolutely and ſo fully ſpoken; for being ſubject unto Errour, and miſcarriages, they may with humility and wiſdom be admoniſhed, 1 Sam. 14. 45, 46. But he ſpeaketh here of the great power which they have, againſt which the people dare not to mutter, Prov. 30. 31. and ought not without much reverence to conteſt withal, Job 34. 18.

V. 5. *Whoſo keepeth the commandement, ſhall know no evil*] This may be underſtood either of the Commands of God, Piety and godly Wiſdom will teach a man to walk ſo circumſpectly, as that he ſhall not provoke the wrath of the King to his own ruine: or of Commandment of the King, whereof he ſpake, verſ. 2.

he that obſerveth his commandement, ſhall know no evil,] None of the danger before mentioned, verſ. 3. ſhall live ſecurely, and quietly

quietly out of fear, Rom. 13. 3,4. 1 Tim. 2. 2.

and a wise mans heart discerneth both time and judgment] This is a qualification of the precept, a wise man will not for fear of danger, or hope of advantage, do all that is commanded him by a blind obedience, but he considereth the season wherein, and the manner how to execute commands: or he knowes to find out a proper season, and right way to apply himself unto the Prince, to prevent his displeasure, to gain his favour, to qualifie or alter his Commands, if they be any way grievous, 1 Chron. 21. 3. Judg. 6. 27. Gen. 32. 7, 8, 13, 16, 17. & 33. 12, 14. 1 Sam. 25. 18——. 1 Chron. 12. 32. Neh. 2. 4, 5, 12, 16. Esth. 4. 5. & 7. 2. & 8. 5, 6.

V. 6, 7. *Because to every purpose, there is time and judgment: therefore the misery of man is greater upon him. For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?*] Because to every purpose or enterprize there is a proper season, and peculiar manner of acting, upon which narrow points, the happy success of such undertakings do depend, and this cannot without much wisdome be duly observed: hence it cometh to passe, that the misery of man is great upon him. This general is to be applyed

plyed to the particular caſe, a man by incurring the diſpleaſure of his Prince, bringeth much miſery upon himſelf, becauſe he wanteth that wiſdom, which ſhould ſuggeſt a proper opportunity, and right way of regaining his favour again. When there is ignorance and folly within, dangers and ſnares without, it is hard for a man to walk ſafely. There is no greater part of wiſdome then the prudent obſerving of times, circumſtances, and the right manner of tranſacting buſineſſes that are of weight and conſequence unto us, Jer. 8. 7, 8. Amos 5. 13. Luke 19. 44. Prov. 15. 23. Act. 22. 25 — 29. Act. 23. 6, 7.

for he knoweth not that which ſhall be.] Becauſe a man cannot foreſee future events, nor exactly judge of the conſequences of actions, therefore it is very difficult to avoid many of thoſe miſeries which by reaſon of this ignorance do attend him. There is one ſeaſon, and one manner of acting, which would have been ſeconded with ſucceſs, if a man could have foreſeen it, but any other time, any other way of proceeding, would miſcarry: great therefore muſt needs be the miſery of man by reaſon of this ignorance, who hath a thouſand waies to miſſe the mark, and but one to hit it. A man cannot ſo much as fore-appoint his own actions for the future,

future, much leſſe foreſee the conſequences and iſſues which would follow thereupon, Prov. 27. 1. Jam. 4. 14. None can foretell a man what ſhall be, but God alone, Iſa. 41. 23. & 44. 7. & 46. 10. Onely this a wiſe and holy man may be ſure of, that whatever falls out ſhall be for his good, though it may be contrary to his deſire and expectation, 1 Cor. 3. 22.

V. 8. *There is no man that hath power over the ſpirit, to retain the ſpirit, neither hath he power in the day of death.*] By *ſpirit*, he meaneth the breath of life, or the ſoul. So it is often underſtood, Gen. 6. 19. Job 7. 7. Iſa. 42. 5. Pſal. 104. 29. Luke 8. 55. Jam. 2. 26.

This may be underſtood, 1. Generally, to ſignifie the weakneſs which is in man to help himſelf againſt the greateſt future evil, namely, death: no power, induſtry, wiſedome, can keep the Soul, when God by death requires it: no man hath the dominion over his own life, to live as long as it pleaſeth himſelf; nor over death, to repell and reſiſt Heb. 9. it when it comes, Pſal. 49. 7——10, 27.

2. Particularly, to the preſent argument of obedience to Princes, whoſe wrath is as the roaring of a Lyon, whoſe diſpleaſure cannot

not be avoided. An offender hath no power to retain his life, when ſupream authority paſſeth judgment againſt it: and therefore we ought wiſely to take heed of thoſe provocations which are likely to caſt us under ſo great danger: for the puniſhment of rebellion can no more be avoided, then the Wind can be held faſt. Therefore we ought to keep our ſelves ſtill within the bounds of duty, and that will preſerve us from evil, as verſ. 5.

to retain the ſpirit] To ſhut it in, to keep it from going away. Neither hath he, or any man, power in the day, or over and againſt, the day of death, to adjourn and prorogue it; *æquo pede pulſat pauperum tabernas, regumque turres.* The power of a King is as little againſt death, as the power of the meaneſt beggar. And therefore ſome have obſerved, That whereas when David is mentioned upon other occaſions, he is uſually ſpoken of by the name of King David; when his death is ſpoken of, there is no mention of his Dignity and Office, but onely of his name, 1 Reg. 2. 1.

and there is no diſcharge in that warr] Or, *no weapon wherewith we can prevail in our war with death.* There is no *apparatus bellicus* againſt ſuch an Adverſary, no arrow or javelin that a man can let flye in this combate; Or, there is no miſſion into this battel,

battel, in vain doth any man go forth to make War againſt death. So the word ſeemeth to be underſtood, Pſal. 78. 49. οὐκ ἔστι παραδεξασθαι εἰς πόλεμον. So Symmachus rendreth it. It is not poſſible to ſtand in battel array againſt ſuch an adverſary: the Septuagint render it thus, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀποστολὴ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πολέμου. There is no miſſion or dimiſſion in that war; which ſenſe our Interpreters ſeem to follow, in their Verſion, There is no diſcharge in that war, no man can have a Vacation or an Exauctoration from that warfare. There is no protection or deliverance from the hand of death.

neither ſhall wickedneſſe deliver thoſe that are given to it] Unquiet wickedneſs, ſinful ſhifts, which men in danger are apt to betake themſelves unto, though a man turn himſelf every way, and move every ſtone, yet he ſhall not be able to deliver himſelf. Saul and Pilate would fain ſhift off the guilt of their ſins upon the people, 1 Sam. 15. 21. Matth. 27. 24. and Caiaphas pretended neceſſity for his perſecuting of Chriſt, Joh. 11. 50. but this did not deliver their ſouls. By *wickedneſſe*, here may be underſtood, in relation to the argument of the text, Rebellion, Sedition, diſobedience againſt Magiſtrates, as 1 Sam. 24. 13. The words are a μείωσις, *wickedneſſe ſhall not deliver*, that is, It ſhall deſtroy

ſtroy thoſe that uſe it; as Rom. 1. 16. Pſal. 51. 17. Prov. 17. 21. Prov. 11. 4.

V. 9. *All this have I ſeen, and applyed mine heart unto every work, that is done under the Sun: There is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.*] With his wonted tranſition he paſſeth on to the obſerving of another Vanity, which was to be found amongſt men; I applyed or gave mine heart unto every work, as Chap. 7. 26. teaching us with ſpecial attention to obſerve the wayes of Gods providence in the world, Pſal. 111. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. When he was thus conſidering of the right means of living comfortably, by yielding due obedience unto Government: He found that ſome Princes were ſo tyrannical and intolerable, that it was very hard for men to live quietly under them, they go on without controle, and miſerably afflict the poor people, Prov. 28. 15, 16. for whoſe good and comfort they were appointed, Rom. 13. 4. God thus pleaſing in his Juſtice many times to puniſh the ſins of a Nation, by giving them up into the hands, under the will of unrighteous Governours, Zach. 11. 6. Hoſ. 13. 11. Job 34. 30. Iſa. 10. 6. & 14. 20. & 19. 4. But he ſhews the vanity of ſuch Tyrannical courſes. They tend at laſt to the hurt of thoſe that uſe them: the Rod which beateth the children, is uſu-

ally at last thrown into the fire. As their power hath put into their hands a greater liberty of sinning, so hath it heaped up for them a greater measure of wrath, Isa. 10.12. Dan.11.36——40. Isa.14.4——23. 1 Reg. 15.29,30.

V.10. *And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the Holy: and they were forgotten in the City where they had so done: This is also vanity.*] These words are obscure, some understanding the former part of wicked Rulers, and the later part of good Rulers: others, the whole, only of wicked ones. The sum of the former sense is this; When I considered the rule of Tyrants over others, I observed that when they were dead and buried, they did as it were come and return again in their Children or wicked Successors, who reigned like them, Job 8.18,19. or when they had been deprived and deposed, and so as it were buried, I saw them return to domination again. But other good men, who had walked with God in his holy place, are driven out of sight, made to run into corners, and as it were buried in forgetfulness, Prov.28.12,28. Psal. 12.8. even in that City where they had done Right. This he looked on as a great Vanity, that the memory of good men should perish;

periſh; and wicked men ſhould be had in honour. But the other ſenſe which applyeth all to wicked Rulers, ſeemeth to be more genuine, and is followed by our Tranſlation; I ſaw wicked Rulers continue all their life long in the place of the Holy one, to be had in great honour, and after they had gone in and out before the people in the place of Juſtice and Government, (which is the Throne of God) I ſaw them magnificently buried in very great pomp and ſolemnity, Luke 16.22. yet being dead, notwithſtanding all thoſe flatteries and formalities in their funeral, their name and memories did quickly periſh and dye with their bodies, inſomuch, that in that very City where they had lived in ſo great power, and been buried in ſo much ſtate, they were preſently forgotten, neither the Nobleneſs of their Families, nor the flatteries of their Creatures, nor the magnificent Monuments erected for them, were able to preſerve their names from rottenneſſe, Pſal. 37. 9, 10, 35, 36. Prov. 10.7. By the place of the *Holy*, or of the *Holy one*, as Hab. 3. 3. underſtand the Tribunals of Judgment, whereon they ſit as his Vicegerents, Deut. 1. 17. Pſal. 82. 1. Exod. 22. 28. 1 Chron. 29. 23. 2 Chron. 19. 6. By *coming and going*, ſeems to be intimated

mated the administration of the publick Office of Government, elsewhere expressed in the like manner, by going in and out before the people, Numb. 27. 17. Deut. 31. 2. 1 Reg. 3. 7.

and they were forgotten] The Septuagint render it, *and they were praised*; upon an easie mistake of one letter for another in the original word.

where they had so done] Others, where they had done right, in the first of the two former senses; ὡς δίκαια πράξαντες, as Symmachus: or where whatsoever they did was accompted Right, and so it is appliable to the later sense.

This is also Vanity] All the power and pomp of wicked men in their life, and funerals, is but mere Vanity, since when they are gone, their names and memorials perish with them.

V. 11. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily: therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*] Here is intimated the Reason why wicked Rulers go on without remorse or controle in their tyranny and oppression all their life long; namely, because the Judgments of God threatned against them, are not presently put in execution. The prosperity

ſperity of wicked men doth exceedingly ſtrengthen and harden them in their wickedneſs. This proceedeth from infidelity, and a root of Atheiſm in their hearts, they cannot ſee afar off; or if they do, yet becauſe evil ſeems far from them, therefore they go on ſecurely, abuſing the goodneſs and long-ſuffering of God unto preſumption, which ſhould have led them unto repentance, Rom. 2. 4.

Firſt, we here ſee that there is ſentence pronounced againſt every wicked work, Iſa. 3.10,11.

Secondly, That the Lord is ſlow in putting that ſentence in execution, being willing that men ſhould repent, 2 Pet. 3. 9.

3. That the ſentence being pronounced, though it come ſlowly, yet it will come ſurely againſt ungodly men. It is every day nearer and nearer, and the longer it ſtayes, the more heavy it will be. It comes with feet of wooll, but it will ſtrike with hands of lead, Gen. 6. 3.

4. That wicked men abuſe Gods patience unto preſumption, and becauſe they ſee all well with them, do deſpiſe his threatnings to their own deſtruction, Iſa. 5. 19. Jer. 5. 12. & 17. 15. 2 Pet. 3. 4. Ezek. 12. 22. Pſal. 55. 19.

5. That Impunity maketh wickedneſſe more exceſſive and outragious, and the heart of man is the more filled and emboldened in wickedneſs, by how much the more experience it hath of Gods ſlowneſs to wrath, Matth. 24.48,49. Prov. 7.18,19,20. 2 Pet. 3.3,4.

therefore the heart of the ſons of men is full in them, or *is fully ſet in them to do evil.*] *is bold in them,* ſo Aquila: *therefore the ſons of men do evil,* ἀφόβως καρδίᾳ, *with a fearleſs and preſumptuous heart;* ſo Symmachus: the phraſe noteth an height of confidence and reſolvedneſs on ſinful courſes, called in the Scripture, madneſs, exceſs, greedineſs, ruſhing, breaking forth, ſuperfluity, &c. Eſth. 7.5. Act. 5.3. Gen. 6.12,13. Luk. 6.11. Jer. 50.38. 1 Pet. 4.4. Epheſ. 4.19. Jer. 6.7. & 8.6. Hoſ. 4.2. Jam. 1.21.

V. 12,13. *Though a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged: yet ſurely I know,* &c.] Here he anſwereth the Temptation whereby good men are apt to be offended at the proſperity of wicked men, Pſal. 73.2,3. Jer. 12.1. and wicked men to be hardened in their ſins thereby: Though a ſinner do continue to do evil, and eſcape puniſhment an hundred times, never ſo often, as Chap. 6.3.

and his dayes be prolonged] Or, his puniſhment delayed: or God do put off his anger, and not ſtraightway execute it upon him, Chap.7.15. Iſa.48.9. Deut.4.40. Exod.20. 12. yet ſurely I know, and do confidently affirm, That it ſhall be well with them that fear God, Iſa. 3.10, 11. The order of the conſequence is inverted, and firſt the remuneration of good men is mentioned, before the puniſhment of evil men, to ſtrengthen their faith, and to comfort them againſt the oppreſſions and injuries of their potent adverſaries, becauſe uſually the rage of Tyrants doth vent it ſelf againſt thoſe that fear God.

which fear before him] This is the character of a good man, they fear God ſincerely, they tremble at his preſence, they labour to commend their hearts and conſciences to him in well doing, Iſa.8.13. When wicked men proſper and rage, they fret not, they fear not their cruelty, but ſtill they hold faſt their integrity, and go on ſteadily in obedience and patient waiting on God.

But it ſhall not be well with the wicked, neither ſhall he prolong his dayes, which are as a ſhadow] *It ſhall not well*] This is a *litotes*, leſs being ſaid then is intended: for the meaning is, It ſhall be very ill with him; as Exod.20.7. Pſal.34.5. Rom.1.16. Pſal.

84. 12. Iſa. 42. 3. Rom. 4. 19. Revel. 12 11.

neither ſhall he prolong his dayes] Long life is oftentimes promiſed as a bleſſing, Prov. 28. 16. Exod. 20. 12. Pſal. 91. 16. Prov. 3. 2. and the contrary threatned as a curſe, Pſal. 55. 23. and though they ſeem to live long, their longeſt life is but as a ſhadow, which ſuddenly is gone, Pſal. 144. 4. wrath doth at laſt certainly overtake them. Whereas in Scripture ſometimes prolonging of ones dayes, relates to a life after death, and a victory over it, Iſa. 53. 10.

V. 14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth*] He doth not paſs this Cenſure upon the wiſe and righteous providence of God, who ordereth all the ſeeming confuſions and diſorders which are in the world, and who is pleaſed after a ſeeming inequality to diſpence good or evil unto men, contrary to what our reaſon doth judge moſt equal and righteous, Job 9. 22. & 21. 7, 8. But firſt he ſpeaketh according to the judgment of fleſh and blood, which is apt to judge hardly of ſo ſtrange a diſtribution, Pſal. 73. 13, 14. 2. He doth it, to ſhew the vanity of all outward things which do variouſly happen unto men under the Sun, which being diſtributed without any great difference, ſometimes evil things,

things to good men, and good things to evil men, do lead us neceſſarily to think but meanly of them, and to look after a further Judgment, wherein rewards and puniſhments ſhall be in a more notable manner diſpenced, Chap. 7. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 19. And even in this diſtribution there is much goodneſs ſhewed to one man in his ſufferings, whereby his graces are exerciſed: and much wrath and juſtice to others in their proſperity, whereby they are many times hardened and enſnared, Pſal. 69. 22. Hoſ. 13. 6.

V. 15. *Then I commended mirth, becauſe a man hath no better thing under the Sun, then to eat, and to drink, and to be merry,* &c.] Some make this to be a ſenſual and carnal deduction drawn from the former obſervation, that ſince by a mans moſt circumſpect walking he can no more free himſelf from evils, then if he lived more looſely, and ſince evil men do many times go away with the rewards of good men, and good men ſuffer ſuch things as they had not deſerved: ſince a man gets nothing by his holineſs, nor loſeth any thing by his wickedneſs: It is therefore the beſt way to take our pleaſures, to eat and to drink and be merry, and to take no further care then how we may for the preſent gratifie our licentious deſires,

1 Cor. 15. 32. Isa. 22. 12, 13, Amos 6. 3—6. Psal. 73. 11, 12. But I rather understand the words in the sense formerly expressed, Chap. 2. 24. & 3. 12, 13, 22. & 5. 18. Since it is impossible for a man to free himself from those common vanities and temptations which are under the Sun, Therefore there is no greater wisdom, no better remedy of our present vexations, then to compose our hearts in an holy calmness and security, not over-curiously or querulously to inquire into the dark providences of God in the World, but with an holy submission to commit our selves to the Lord, and in his fear, and with cheerfulness and thanksgiving to enjoy the present blessings which his bounty hath bestowed upon us, without any unquietnesse of spirit at the disorders we see, or any anxious and sollicitous thoughts touching any thing which for the future we may fear, Phil. 4. 11, 12, 13. 2 Thess. 3. 12.

for that shall abide with him of his labour, the dayes of his life, which God giveth him under the Sun] This is the onely fruit which a man can reap in this life from all his labour; greater benefit he can never expect from any thing under the Sun, then to have food and rayment, with cheerfulness of heart in the use of them.

V. 16.

V. 16, 17. *When I applyed mine heart to know wiſdome, and to ſee the buſineſſe that is done upon the earth*] He here concludeth with a reaſon why a man ought not anxiouſly to perplex or diſquiet his thoughts about the Works of Gods Providence, in the Government of the World, why good men are afflicted, and ill men advanced; becauſe when a wiſe man hath applyed his mind, made it his buſineſs, broken his ſleep in this inquiry, yet he ſhall come ſhort of what he promiſed himſelf, and muſt at laſt acquieſce in the Soveraignty and Dominion of God, whoſe Works are unſearchable, and whoſe Judgements paſt finding out: therefore we muſt ſuppreſſe all raſh cenſures of thoſe things the reaſons whereof we are not able to attain unto, and with calmneſſe and tranquility of ſpirit, labour to enjoy preſent comforts rather then to buſie our ſelves with curious and fruitleſſe inquiries.

to ſee the buſineſſe that is done on the earth] That is, to diſcover and get a clear, diſtinct and ſatisfying accompt of all the works of Gods providence in the world, to comprehend the reaſons of the adminiſtration and Government thereof, to have a rational view of the compages and whole frame of humane affairs, to reconcile all the ſeeming abſurdities and incongruities which appear in them,

them, to look exactly into the Temperament and Compoſition of ſo many infinite, and contrary events, unto the making up of one moſt exquiſite and beautiful work

for there is that neither day nor night ſeeth ſleep with his eyes] As Chap. 2. 23. This he ſpeaketh of his inceſſant ſtudy, in denying himſelf neceſſary refreſhments, out of the intentneſſe of his minde in this inquiry, as ſtrong and fixed thoughts will keep away ſleep from our eyes, Pſal. 127. 2. Eccleſ. 5. 12.

a man cannot find out the work that is done under the Sun] Cannot perfectly underſtand: or ſearch into the counſel of God in the government of humane affaires, his ſecret Judgements, his admirable contrivances, his various wiſdome Job. 11. 7, 8, 9. Pſal. 36. 6, & 92. 5. a man can neither by labour, nor by wiſdome, (the two great Engines and Inſtruments of diſcovery,) attain unto it. He doth not hereby diſcourage us from ſearching into the works of God, which elſewhere we are directed to obſerve, Pſal. 111. 2. & 104. 24. & 105. 5. & 106. 13. Iſa. 5. 12. But only teacheth us after all, to adore the depths of his wiſdome, to reſt ſatisfied that whatever he doth, how contrary ſo ever it appear unto humane reaſon, is righteouſly, holily, and wiſely done. Secret and wonder-

ful

ful his works may be, but they are never unjuſt: and therefore when we cannot underſtand them. we muſt admire and adore them, Job 9. 2——14: & 40. 2. 3. Rom. 11. 33——36.

CHAP. IX.

IN the end of the former Chapter, the Wiſe man obſerved the ſecret and hidden courſe of Gods providence; and in this, proceedeth in the ſame argument, taking notice of a confuſed adminiſtration of the world in common Events which do equally befall both the good and the bad, even as death at the laſt hapneth to them all alike, verſ. 1, 2, 3. Whereupon he reſumeth his former remedy againſt this vexation, to wit, that we ſhould comfortably enjoy life, and the good things thereof, while we have time to do it, and not defer it till it be too late, becauſe when death comes, it deprives us of all the comforts and delights which this preſent life doth afford unto us; upon which occaſion he praiſeth life before death, becauſe therein we have the liberty of enjoying all good things under the Sun, the ſenſe of all which Death doth bereave us of, verſ. 4, 5, 6. And therefore ſince the dayes of our life are but Vanity, we ought with much cheerfulneſſe and intention

tention of mind to enjoy all the ſweet contentments which life doth afford us, yet ſo, as not to leave the duties of our Calling undone, this being all the portion which we can have in this life of all our labours, verſ. 7, 8, 9, 10. After which he falleth into the contemplation of another wonderful providence of God, whereby events ſeem to befall men, rather by chance, then by reaſon and counſel, and contrary to thoſe previous diſpoſitions by which we are led to expect far different effects from thoſe which do come to paſſe, verſ. 11. The reaſon whereof in part he ſubjoyns, namely that invincible ignorance which is in all men of the proper ſeaſons wherein actions are to be done, or elſe diſability to foreſee and prevent the evils which are coming towards them, and do ſuddenly ſurprize them, verſ. 12. Laſtly leſt he ſhould ſeem to dictate unto us a ſupine neglect of all good means towards our deſired Ends, in regard that things ſeem to be governed rather by chance, then by counſel, He ſheweth the excellent uſe of godly wiſdom to deliver us out of ſuch dangers, by an example of One poor, but wiſe man, who being in a little City meanly man'd and defended, did by his wiſdome deliver it from the power and military aſſaults of a mighty King which came againſt it. Yet ſhewing withal

withal a very great Vanity amongſt men in neglecting ſo wiſe a man becauſe of his poverty, verſ. 13, 14, 15, 16. whence he concludeth, by ſhewing the excellency of wiſdome, that ſilent wiſdome is better then clamorous and buſtling power, and then all inſtruments of war. And withal, that as one wiſe man may avert much danger, ſo one wicked man may deſtroy much good, verſ. 17, 28.

Verſ. 1. *All this I conſidered in mine heart*] I gave all this to my heart. I laid it up in mine heart. It noteth ſpecial ſtudy and attention thereunto, Luke 2. 51. & 21. 14.

even to declare all this] To prove, examine, perfectly to underſtand, and clearly to manifeſt all this. The word ſignifies to purifie and purge, becauſe when a thing is foyled and defaced, it is the more difficultly known, 2 Cor. 3. 16. 17., 18.

That the Righteous, and the wiſe, and their works, are in the hand of God] That the perſons and works of the beſt and moſt prudent men are not in their own power or diſpoſal but are guided by a Divine providence, and by a ſecret, inviſible, and unpreventable direction from above, by him who worketh all things, by the counſel of his own Will: To be

be *in the hand of God*, noteth, 1. Subjection to his power, Joh. 3. 35. Matth. 28. 18. Joh. 5. 22. 2. Direction and guidance by his povidence, Act. 4. 28. Jer. 10. 23. Prov. 16. 9. & 20. 24. Exod. 34. 24. 3. Ruling by his powerful though ſometimes ſecret and inviſible Government. So the hand of the King, notes the command or order given by the King, 1 Chron 25. 3. 4. Cuſtody and protection from evil by his care Eſter 2. 3. Iſa. 62. 3. Joh. 10. 28, 29. Our works are tranſient things, and as they come from us, ſeem to vaniſh away, and to be no more, they are quickly out of our hands: but they are alwayes in Gods hands, and written in his book, he reſerveth them unto the time of Retribution, and keepeth an exact Record and Regiſter of them: So that no one of them ſhall be unrewarded, Heb. 6. 10. Our perſons, our times, our imployments are in the hand of God, men cannot do to us, or diſpoſe of us as they will, Joh. 19. 10, 11, neither can we diſpoſe of our ſelves as we pleaſe: but he who is wiſeſt, and knowes what is beſt for us, and what uſes we are fitteſt for, doth as it pleaſeth him, order both our perſons, our times, our places, our callings, our work, our wages, as may be moſt for the glory of his Name, whoſe we are, and whom it is our happineſſe to ſerve in whatſoever

ever ſtation he ſhall be pleaſed to place us in, 2 Sam. 15. 25. 26.

no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them] The words admit of ſuch a reading as this; The Righteous, and the wiſe, and their works are in the hand of God: Alſo Love and Hatred, to wit, are in the hand of God, He loveth whom he will, he hateth whom he will, Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13, 15, 16. No man knoweth any thing that is before him: no man can diſcover the counſel or the love and hatred of God by any outward things which he looketh on, the ſame things equally happening to the good and to the bad, Chap. 8. 14. Matth. 5. 45. Or, no man can know whether the things which he loveth, or the things which he hateth, ſhall befall him, though he guide his works with never ſo much rectitude and prudence; events depending on the providence of God, and not on the counſel of man, Rom. 9. 16. Jer. 9. 23, 24. Iſa. 45. 9. Jam. 4. 13, 14, 15.

V. 2. *All things come alike unto all: and there is one event*, &c.] Some would have theſe words, and ſo forward to verſ. 13. to be the perverſe judgement of the fleſh, and the voice of Atheiſts and Epicures upon the doctrine of providence before obſerved: But we muſt remember, that Solomon ſpeak-

eth

eth only of outward things, and the different administration of them: and of the remedies of vanity and vexation, in regard of our condition here under the Sun, restraining and limiting all the confused events of worldly things by the holy hand and wise providence of God: And all the precepts which might otherwise seem to savour of Sensuality and Epicurisme by the fear of God, and honest labour in our vocations: which things being premised, all that is here set down, doth well consist with the will of God, and the scope of Solomon in this book, which is to set down such rules de *Tranquillitate animi*, as may make a man comfortably to digest the vanities of this life, and sweetly to pass over the time of his pilgrimage here.

All things come alike to All] *Omnia ficut omnibus*: So Symmachus, ἅπαντα ὁμοια τοῖς πᾶσι, *All alike unto All*. This is the reason why we cannot judge of love or hatred by outward things: for albeit good things are promised unto good men, and evil things threatned unto evil men; yet God doth so proceed in the execution of these promises and threatnings, as that faith only can discover the difference; all things outwardly, and to the eye of sense appearing alike to all: As if the Lord had subjected all things to the domi-

domination of Fortune, rather than of Justice; and that the events of the world, were all rather casual and contingent, than either predetermined by the counsel, or governed by the providence of God.

one event to the righteous and to the wicked, &c.] Moses dyes in the wilderness, as well as those that murmured. Josiah in the wars as well as Ahab. Is Abraham rich? so is Nabal: Is Solomon wise? so is Achitophel: Is Joseph honoured by Pharoah? so is Doeg by Saul. And usually, as to outward things, the advantage is on the side of the worst men, Ps. 73. 12, 13. Mal. 3. 15.

to the righteous and the wicked,] In regard of their spiritual state and condition towards God. Not that any man is perfectly righteous in this life, Chap. 7. 20. but inchoatly by the first fruits of the Spirit. Comparatively, in opposition to the wicked. Evangelically, by sincere dispositions of heart, and by the ordinary prevalency and dominion of grace.

to the clean and unclean] Between whom great difference was to be made, Ezek. 22. 26.

to him that sacrificeth, and him that sacrificeth not] That carefully observeth, or prophanely neglecteth the worship of God; as we see in the examples of Jeroboam and Jehu.

as is the good, ſo is the ſinner] The doubling of the prefix *Caph*, noteth an equal compariſon, and abſolute ſimilitude between the things compared, Gen. 18. 25. & 44. 18. Iſa. 24. 2. 1 Reg. 22. 4.

and he that ſweareth] Namely, falſly or raſhly, without truth, or judgement, or righteouſneſs.

as he that feareth an oath] The character of a godly man, who doth ſo reverence the great name of God, Deut. 28, 58. that by the fear thereof, he is kept from ſwearing raſhly by it, and when he is called to ſwear, doth it with an awful regard towards that glorious and fearful Name.

V. 3. *This is an evil amongſt all things that are done*, &c.] When I conſider the courſe of providence, I found this to be one of the moſt grievous things which hapneth under the Sun, That all things, the ſame equal events, both in life & death, do happen not only to the juſt and the unjuſt, but even to the maddeſt and moſt deſperate of ſinners, who all their life long do give up themſelves unto all exceſs of wickedneſs.

This is an evil among all things] It is not evil in regard of God, who doth all in a moſt wiſe and holy manner: but evil, that is, grievous and troubleſome unto man to behold

hold, a great temptation unto him to conſider, that juſt and wiſe men ſhould be expoſed to the ſelf-ſame miſeries, with fools and ungodly.

an evil amongſt all things] Or, *above all other evils*: So ſome render it, *hoc peſſimum*, this is the worſt of evils. As the Superlative is often expreſſed by an Adjective, governing an Ablative caſe with the Preposition *Caph*: Examples whereof, the Learned give in, 1 Sam. 17. 12. Prov. 30. 30. Cant. 1. 8. Luke 1. 28. Jer. 49. 15.

yea alſo the heart of the ſons of men is full of evil, &c.] *Yea, alſo*; That upon occaſion hereof, when men ſee that it is all one, whether men be good or bad, as to any outward difference in things here below; they judge it vain to ſerve the Lord, they deſpiſe all threats, they undervalue all promiſes, they let looſe the reins, and run headlong unto all kind of wickedneſs and madneſs, all ſort of furious, headſtrong and deſperate exceſs, with boldneſs and preſumption, See Chap. 8. 11.

and after that they go to the dead] After a life ſpent in madneſs and ſenſuality, then they dye. Or, Their later end is to go to the dead: τελευταῖα εἰς νεκρούς; ſo Symmachus. Others, *After that*, (*i.*) Following their own

hea-

heart, running after their own luſts, they do at laſt fall into the pit. The end of all their madneſs is death, Rom. 6. 21.

V. 4. *For to him that is joyned to all the living, there is hope*] In the written Text it is, Who ſhall be choſen? but the Maſoreths direct the reading to be, inſtead of *choſen, joyned*, by a tranſpoſition of the Original letters. This correction ſome Learned men have conceived unneceſſary. Some rendring it thus, For what or which ſhall be choſen? Thereby meaning, how difficult it is to reſolve, which ſtate or condition to chuſe, that of the living or of the dead. Yet quickly paſſing a judgement on the ſide of the living, in regard of the hope a man may have, while he lives, of bettering his condition. Others, annexing theſe words unto the laſt of the former verſe, thus, After all mens madneſs, their end is to dye: Who ſhall be choſen out, or exempted from that comon condition? Since therefore all men, without any choice or exemption, muſt dye, moſt miſerable is the condition of thoſe mad men, whoſe hearts are full of wickedneſs, even till death overtake them: For while men live, there is ſome ground of hope, but the mightieſt of ſinners, when once dead, are paſt hope, and

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in a worse condition than the meanest men who are yet alive. Others, retaining the marginal reading, render it thus, by an interrogation, For who will be joyned, to wit, with the dead? Who will chuse a dead man for his companion, since that is, of all, the most hopeless condition? But this is a forced sense; herein therefore Interpreters do most agree, As for him that is joyned to, or is a companion of the living, He hath hope. While life remains, what evils ever befall a man, he is in hope to break through, and to mend his condition: some good things however he doth yet injoy: But, as to the good things of this world, after death there is no hope. Symmachus, whom the vulgar followeth, rendreth it thus, τὶς γάρ εἰς ἀεὶ διατελέσει ζῶν; Who shall alwaies continue alive? Unto such a man there would be hope. Pagnum & Montanus keep the reading in the Text, and render it thus, Whosoever is chosen unto, or amongst the living, unto him there is hope. The Septuagint renders it differently from all, ὅτι τὶς ὃς κοινωνεῖ πρὸς πάντας τοὺς ζῶντας; Who is there that communicateth with, or towards all the living? They seem to follow, not the written Text, but the reading; and so by communicating, mean joyning in fellowship with the living:

Who

Who is there that ſhall have the ſociety and communion of all the living? Surely none. According to the ſenſe of Symmachus, and Hierom. Marinus Brixianus offereth two other ſenſes; 1. By reading the word actively, with a different punctation, thus, Whoſoever chuſeth any thing while he is yet alive, he hath hope to compaſs and to effect his deſire. 2. By keeping to the written Text, in the paſſive ſenſe, thus, Whoſoever ſhall be choſen unto any life, or condition of life, he may therein have hope; which maketh a clear and a good ſenſe. The Adjective, which we render, *Living*, being uſually taken for the Subſtantive or abſtract, to wit, for *life*; as Gen. 2. 7. Pſ. 21. 4. Prov. 18. 21. Pſ. 63. 3. I take it, the expreſſion we find Iſa. 4. 3. may give light unto this place. Every one that is written among the living: To be choſen among the living, here; ſeems to be the ſame, with being written amongſt the living, there. It is an alluſion unto Cities, wherein there is a *Matricula* or Record kept of ſuch as were Free-men: whereunto the Scripture ſeemeth to allude, Pſ. 87. 6. Ezek. 13. 9. Heb. 12. 23. Jer. 17. 13. Luke 10. 20. Pſ. 4. 3. For as the Elect are ſaid to be written in the Book of life, Dan. 12. 1. Pſ. 69. 28. Rev. 17. 8. & 21. 27. & 22. 19.

ſo

so the living may be said to be elected unto life; as all such Enrolements, in the Records of a City, do follow upon a preceding choice of the persons so enrolled.

for a living Dog is better than a dead Lion] A proverbial speech, whereby is meant, that the basest and most contemptible person while he lives, is in a better and more hopeful condition than the most honourable, when he is laid in the dust. The Scripture useth the Metaphor of a Dog, to denote the vilest and most abject persons, 2 Reg. 8. 13. Matth. 15. 16. Rev. 22. 15. Phil. 3. 2. as on the other side; a Lion is the most noble of beasts, Prov. 30. 30. yet a dead Lion is exposed to the scorn of the weakest and most fearful creatures, according to the Greek Epigram: καὶ αὐτοὶ νεκρῶ σῶμα λέοντος ἐφυβρίζουσι λαγωοί. The lowest expression of a vile thing, which the Scripture useth, is, A dead Dog, 1 Sam. 24. 14. 2 Sam. 9. 8.

V. 5. *For the living know that they shall dye*] By this knowledge, they gain much, if they rightly improve it: For, 1. Hereby they are perswaded to repent, and to fit themselves to meet with the king of terrours. 2. Hereby they are set seriously to consider, how this unavoidable evil may be sweetned, and sanctified unto them, that they may com-

fortably desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is best of all, 2 Cor. 5. 4. Phil. 1. 20. 3. Hereby they are excited unto duty with more vigor, when they look on this as the day of grace, as the time of light, wherein only they can work, Joh. 9. 4. Isa. 38. 18, 19. Ps. 118. 17. Job. 14. 14. Ps. 39. 1. 4. & 90. 12. But 4. and which seems most pertinent unto this place, knowing that they shall dye, and that the present comforts of this world, are for the use of the living only, and not of the dead; therefore they set themselves comfortably to enjoy the good blessings of God here, while they have time to use them, and by a cheerful and thankful enjoyment of present mercies, to fit themselves for a happy dissolution. For godliness teacheth us, both quietly to enjoy the world, and willingly to leave it when God calls.

but the dead know not any thing.] This is not spoken absolutely, for the spirits of just men are made perfect, and are with Christ; but according to the subject matter in the context, They know nothing of the things of the world, or any outward comforts and blessings here below under the Sun, they can no longer be delighted with the knowledge or fruition of earthly things, Job 14. 21.

neither have they any more reward.] He speaketh not of the reward of a holy life, for so

ſo the dead have a reward, becauſe their works do follow them, Rev. 14. 13. but he ſpeaketh of the comfortable uſe of outward bleſſings, as the only reward which worldly things can afford them for all their labour; as it is more plainly expounded in the next verſe, and Chap. 3. 22. & 5. 18, 19. & 8. 15.

for the memory of them is forgotten] They are wholly removed from all humane and worldly converſation with men, their houſe, their families, their friends know them no more. So far are they from enjoying and knowing outward things, that the living do by degrees forget them, Iſa. 26. 14. Job 10. 8, 9, 10.

V. 6. *Alſo their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now periſhed*] He ſpeaketh in relation to outward things; living men meet here with objects of all ſorts, ſome lovely, ſome hateful: ſome things that they pity, ſome that they envy. But when they are dead, they have no knowledge left of any ſuch things, and conſequently no affections at all towards them. And becauſe it were endleſs to recount particulars, therefore he concludeth in general, That they have not *any more a portion for ever in any thing under the ſun*] They have not the poſſeſſion,

the fruition, ſo much as the contemplation of any worldly things; They carry away nothing with them; their glory, their contents do not deſcend after them. A covetous man doth no more dote upon wealth, nor an ambitious man upon honour, nor a ſenſual voluptuous man upon pleaſure, all their thoughts, deſires, emulations periſh; therefore if ever we will enjoy the good bleſſings of God, it muſt be while we live, becauſe there is no knowledge nor wiſdome in the grave whither we go, Pſ. 49. 17. Luke 12. 20. Job 3. 17, 18, 19. & 7. 7——10.

V. 7. *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*] In as much as the dead neither know, nor enjoy any of theſe worldly bleſſings; and in as much as God gives them to his ſervants in love, and as comfortable refreſhments unto them in the daies of their vanity: Therefore he exhorteth unto a cheerful fruition of them, while we have time and liberty ſo to do, that ſo the many other ſorrows and bitterneſs which they ſhall meet with in this life, may be mitigated and ſweetned unto them. He ſpeaketh not (as ſome conceive) of ſenſual, epicurean, and brutiſh exceſs, but of an honeſt, decent, and chearful enjoyment of bleſſings, with thankfulneſs, and in the fear of God.

Go

Go thy way] It is used adverbially, as much as *age igitur*, *eia Agedum*, by way of adhortation, or encouragement; as Gen. 19. 32. Prov. 1. 11. Eccles. 2. 1. Isa. 1. 18. & 55. 11. Since in death thou canst have no love, nor sense of any outward blessings, therefore hearken to my counsel, make use of thy time, and enjoy mercies while thou maiest.

eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a good (*i.*) *a merry heart*] As a sad heart is called an evil heart, Neh. 2. 2. 1 Reg. 21. 7. Ruth. 3. 7. Eccles. 7. 3. *Enjoy the fruit of thine own labours*; as Chap. 3. 22. When he saith, *Thy bread, wine*, &c. he sheweth, that our comforts and delights must be bounded within our own labours and possessions; though stollen waters, and bread of deceit may be sweet, yet it hath gravel and bitterness in it at the last, Prov. 9. 17, 18. 1 Thess. 3. 12. And also, that our delights must be proportioned to the decency of our condition; we must eat, *panem statuti*, our proper portion and dimensum, and not either luxuriously exceed, or sordidly live beneath our own estate and condition, Prov. 30. 8.

for God now accepteth thy works] It is pleasing unto God, that when thou hast, in the fear of his Name, and in obedience to

his Ordinance, laboured, and by his blessing, gotten thee thine appointed portion, then thou shouldest, after an honest, cheerful, decent, and liberal manner, without further anxiety, or sollicitousness enjoy the same. This is the principal boundary of our outward pleasures and delights, still to keep our selves within such rules of piety and moderation, as that our waies may be pleasing unto God; And this shews us the true way to find sweetness in the creature, and to feel joy in the fruition thereof, namely, when our persons and our waies are pleasing unto God; for piety doth not exclude, but only moderate earthly delights, and so moderate them, that though they be not so excessive as the luxurious and sensual pleasures of foolish Epicures, yet they are far more pure, sweet, and satisfactory, as having no guilt, no gall, no curse, nor inward sorrow and terrors attending on them, Nehem. 8. 10.

V. 8. *Let thy garments be alwaies white*] Food and raymentare the substantials of outward blessings, 1 Tim. 6. 8. Having directed unto cheerfulness in the one, he here directs unto decency and comeliness in the other. Whiteness was antiently an expression of things pleasing and delightful. *Albosque dies horasque Serenas, in Silius Italicus. Candidus & felix proximus annus erit,*

in

in Ovid. So the white ſtone of abſolution, is called a white ſtone, Rev. 2. 17. the Aſſes on which perſons of Honour did ride, were white Aſſes, Judg. 5. 10. In like manner they did uſe in the Eaſtern Countreys to uſe white garments, as expreſſions of dignity and honour, Eſth. 8. 15. Therefore our Saviour ſhewing his glory to Peter, and James, and John, in the Mount, had his garments white as light, Matth. 12. 2. And the glory of the Saints in Heaven, is expreſſed by white Robes, Rev. 3. 4, 5, 18. & 6. 11. & 19. 8. Here it is uſed as a Symbole of joy and cheerfulneſs; as on the other ſide, Blackneſs is the colour of grief and ſorrow, Jer. 14. 2. They were wont to uſe white garments at feaſts and joyful ſolemnities: when he ſaith, let them be alwaies white, as it is to be underſtood not abſolutely, as if they were never to mourn, Chap. 7. 2. this was the ſin of the rich Glutton, Luke 16. 19. but with reſtriction to the rules of ſeaſonableneſs and decency, Prov. 5. 19.

And let thine head lack no oyntment] This likewiſe was an expreſſion of joy uſed in feaſts, Luke 7. 46. Joh. 12. 3. and in triumphal ſolemnities, whereunto the Apoſtle ſeemeth to allude, 2 Cor. 2. 14, 15, 16. And in the like occaſions of rejoycing, Amos 6. 6. Prov. 27. 9. As in times of humiliation

miliation and ſorrow, they were wont not to anoint themſelves, Dan. 10. 3. The meaning is, that we ſhould lead our lives with as much freeneſs, cheerfulneſs, and ſweet delight, in the liberal uſe of the good bleſſings of God, as the quality of our degree, the decency of our condition, and the Rules of Religious wiſdome, and the fear of God do allow us, not ſordidly or frowardly denying our ſelves the benefit of thoſe good things which the bounty of God hath beſtowed upon us.

V. 9. *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou loveſt*] See Life, or enjoy life. So Symmachus, ἀπόλαυσον ζωῆς; as 1 Pet. 3. 10. Eccl. 2. 1, 24.

with the wife whom thou loveſt] Therefore he ſpeaketh not in the perſon of an Epicure, to whom ſtollen waters are ſweet, Prov. 9. 17. but of a lawful and chaſt love; as Prov. 5. 15——19.

whom thou loveſt] This is the character of a wife, and the duty of the husband, that which makes their communion comfortable, Ezek. 24. 16, 18. Eph. 5. 25, 28, 29. therefore the husband is called the friend of his wife, Jer. 3. 20. There is a ſpecial freeneſs of delight and liberty of love which is allowed in this relation, though ſtill within the bounds of honour and ſobriety, Prov. 5. 19.

Gen.

Gen. 26. 8. It noteth also the difference between conjugal and adulterous love; that is, a love wherein a man may live joyfully, or may sweetly enjoy his life with comfort; whereas the pleasures of the other lead unto death, Prov. 2. 18. & 5. 3——11. & 6. 26, 32, 33. & 7. 23.

all the daies of the life of thy vanity] As Chap. 6. 12. This is repeated again, to mind us in the midst of all our earthly contentments, that they are perishing and Temporary things. This living joyfully All our daies, is to be understood as the *Almaiel*, in the former verse, with restriction to the duties of piety and humiliation, 1 Cor. 7. 5. and also it intimateth the duty of cohabitation, that they should not depart one from the other, 1 Cor. 7. 10.

which he hath given thee] That may refer either to the wife, which Solomon elsewhere tells us, is the gift of God, Prov. 19. 14. or to the daies of the life of our vanity, which also are the gift of God, Job. 10. 12. Act. 17. 25. Ps. 31. 15.

this is thy portion in this life] As Chap. 2. 24. & 3. 13. & 5. 18, 19, & 8. 15. when thou dyest, thou shalt carry none of these comforts away with thee; in the next world there is no enjoyment of these kind of blessings, Ps. 49. 17. Matth. 22. 30.

V. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*] Having instanced in the principal outward comforts of life, food, rayment, marriage, he concludeth with a general precept, that in all things else wherein the Tranquillity and comfort of life did consist, they should freely and cheerfully make use of them, before they go into their graves, where, as they shall have none of these outward materials to work upon, so neither, if they had them, should they have any wisdome or skill to make use of them, or to reap delight from them.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do] Whatsoever is within thy power, and thy abilities can reach unto, whatever works in thy Calling do belong unto thee, or whatsoever state and condition the providence of God shall put thee in, Gen. 32. 13, Lev. 5. 7. & 12, 8, Num. 6. 21. Judg. 9. 33. whatsoever just occasion of honest cheerfulness doth offer it self unto thee, embrace it.

do it with thy might] Vigorously, industriously, instantly, do not slack time, nor defer it till it be too late, Rom. 12. 11. 2 Thess. 3. 8. Tit. 3. 8, 14.

for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdome in the grave whither thou goest] In this life thou hast opportunities of doing

doing good, of delighting thy self in the studies of knowledge and wisdome, of improving thy strength and invention to pleasure thy self and others, Therefore work while it is day, and while thou hast yet an opportunity, Joh. 9. 4. & 12. 35. Gal. 6. 10. while there is strength in your hand, while there is wisdome in your head, while the vigour of your faculties last: for in the Grave, or in the state of death, whither thou art every moment hastening, there is no place for any of these things, that is not *saeculum operis*, but *mercedis*. If thou wilt be rewarded then, thou must work now. *Carpe diem, quam minimum credulus postero. Jam te premet nox.* Though this be appliable unto all duties of piety and charity, yet the scope of the place aims principally at the enjoyment of the comforts and commodities of this present life, which we are cheerfully while they are put into our hands, to enjoy, and not put them off till death, when we shall have neither skill nor strength to use them. Here also we may observe what manner of delights he allowe th them, namely, such as arise from honest labours, and are guided and moderated by art, knowledge, and wisdome. Our delights must not be sensual, but rational and industrious.

V. 11. *I returned and saw under the Sun,*

that

that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong; &c.] These words some make to be the observation of another Vanity under the Sun, to wit, That Events and Successes do sometimes fall out quite otherwise then the preparation or probability of second causes do seem to promise: That things are so done usually in the world, as that no reason can at all be given of them. Others make them a kind of corrective to the former precept of living joyfully in the use of all outward blessings; Though it were to be wished that man could thus evenly and comfortably pass over his dayes, yet when I further considered, I found, That no man can ever enjoy a stable and constant Delight in this world, in regard that future events do oftentimes quite vary from those principles and preparations which went before them. The words seem to have relation both to the general scope of the Chapter before, Touching the powerfull and unsearchable providence of God, Chap. 8. 16, 17, & 9. 1, 2. & also to the words immediately preceding: for whereas he had advised, That whatever our hand findeth to do, we should do it with our might: Lest any man should thereupon presume, that things must needs fall out according to those abilities which he bringeth unto the effecting of them; He here direc-

eteth us to look up in all our works, above second causes, not to trust in our own gifts, nor to attribute any thing to our own strength, to remember, *that it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God who sheweth mercy*, Rom. 9. 16. and accordingly to implore his assistance and blessing in all our labours, who worketh all our works for us, Isa. 26. 12. Psal. 127. 1, 2. Deut. 8. 17, 18. Prov. 10. 22. Jer. 9. 23. And having done our duty, and used such good means as God affordeth, then quietly to refer the success unto God, in whose hand are all the ways of the children of men, and upon whose good pleasure do all the issues of things depend.

I returned and To see] The Infinitive Mood is put for the Indicative, as Jer. 14. 5. Zach. 12. 10.

I saw under the Sun] I considered the things which are done in this Life amongst men, and found by my observation, *That the race is not to the swift*] That swiftness doth not ever avail a man to win the prize, or to escape danger, 2 Sam. 2. 18, 23. Jer. 46. 5, 6. Amos 2. 14, 15, 16.

nor the battel to the strong] That the strength of the mighty doth not alwayes avail them either to fight or conquer, Judg. 7. 7. 1 Sam. 14. 6. 2 Chron. 14. 9——12. Psal. 33. 17, 18.

nor

nor yet bread to the wise] Livelihood and subsistence to men whose wisdome should commend them to honour and great place, Chap. 10. 6, 7. Psal. 127. 2. David was put to desire supplies from Nabal; and Christ, in whom were all the treasures of wisdome, was ministred unto, Luke 8. 2. Matth. 8. 20. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Rev. 3. 17.

nor riches to men of understanding] We read of rich fools, 1 Sam. 25. 2, 3, 25. Luke 12. 16, 20. and of poor wise men here, vers. 15.

nor yet favour to men of skill] Joseph cast into prison, Daniel in the Lions den, David hated of Saul.

But Time and chance happeth to them all] Their Endeavours do arrive at such a success as the Councel of God had pre-ordained, which is wholly hidden from our eyes, and therefore seem to fall out many times rather at adventure, and casually, then according to any regular meanes that have been used in order unto them. Whereby we learn, that Divine providence hath a wise and holy hand in ordering the most casual and fortuitous Events, to the execution of his righteous counsells, 1 Reg. 22. 34. Esther 6. 1. 11. 1 Sam. 6. 7. 12. 2 Reg. 3. 22. 24. He doth not hereby discourage us from the use of meanes, but direct us in the

use

use of them, not to sacrifice to our net, nor to glory in our own wisdome, but to wait upon the blessing and providence of God, to give him the praise of our successes, and quietly beat whatever miscarriages he hath ordered to befall us, 1 Cor. 1. 31. Jam. 4. 13—16. 2 Sam. 15. 25, 26.

V. 12. *For man also knoweth not his time*] Events are then said to be casual, when no prævious knowledge or counsel hath made way unto them. Therefore to prove that even able, wise, and skilfull men are subject in common with others unto Time and chance, he here addeth, That *man knoweth not his time*] καιρὸν αὐτοῦ, so the Septuagint; ὥραν ἀυτοῦ, so Symmachus: His proper season and opportunity of working. But by the similitudes here used to illustrate this ignorance, It should seem, that *His Time*, noteth the time of evil and calamity, which many times befalls a man when he little dreams of it. This is called *his day*, or *his hour*, Psal. 37. 13. Joh. 16. 4. & 12, 1. Calamity comes as a Thief in the night, unseen, unexpected, Matth. 24. 50. 1 Thess. 5. 3. Luke 12. 20. Or as a snare which a man thinks not of, Luk. 21. 35.

As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, [evil and exitious unto them,] *and as the birds that are caught in a snare; so are the*

sons

sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them] Many times when we think things to go best with us, as the fish and the bird go with much hope and promise of good to themselves, unto the bait and snare: so men fall into evil by those very means by which they promised much good unto themselves, Esther, 5. 12. Psal. 69. 22. 2 Sam. 13. 28. Luke 12. 19, 20. He intimateth likewise, that as the wisdom of man can easily deceive the simple birds, so the providence and power of God can be too hard for all the wisdome of men, and ensnare them in their own counsels, Job 5. 12, 13, 14. Prov. 11. 5, 6. He can suddenly infatuate them, Isa. 19. 11——15. or suddenly start up some unexpected circumstance, which shall vary the nature of the whole business, though otherwise never so wisely contrived, 1 Sam. 23. 27, 28. Job 22. 10. Psal. 64. 7.

V. 13, 14, 15, 16. *This wisdome have I seen also under the Sun, and it seemed great unto me: There was a little City, &c.*] These words may be understood either as the Observation of another Vanity, namely, the disrespect which is shewed unto wisdome when it is over-clouded with poverty, by the example or parable of a little City, delivered from a great King, by a poor despised man:

man; or elſe in Relation to the words next preceding, thus; Though it be true, that ſometimes Events fall out contrary to the ſecond cauſes, ſo that even wiſe men are diſappointed in their works of thoſe ends which regularly ſhould have enſued upon them; yet wiſdome ought not therefore to be deſpiſed, no not in the meaneſt perſons; for as ſometimes God doth deny ſucceſs to the moſt proper and probable cauſes, ſo doth he at other times give great deliverance by unknown and unthought on means. The ſcope is to ſhew the excellent uſe of wiſdome, and how highly it is to be valued, though it be as a treaſure in an earthen veſſel, 2 Cor. 4. 7. though brought unto us by mean hands: as David bleſſed God for the wiſe counſel of Abigail, 1 Sam. 25. 32, 33. and Naaman rejected not the advice of a little maid, 2 Reg. 5. 2, 3, 4. wiſdome, in but a woman, ſaved a City from deſtruction, 2 Sam. 20. 16——22.

It ſeemed great unto me] However the wiſdome of the poor man was undervalued by others, yet it ſeemed great unto me; ſo much the greater, by how much fewer helps and means he had to attain unto it.

There was a little City, and few men within it] Here in a parable, he ſheweth the excellency of wiſdome, by the greatneſs of the danger

danger from which it delivereth; set forth by a little City, with few men, and weak defence, assaulted by a great King, with a numerous Army, and strong bulwarks; so that the disadvantage was every way on the City side.

now there was found in it a poor wise man] He found in it: Verbs active of the third person are used sometimes passively, Isa. 9. 6. Hos. 10. 2. God many times maketh one wise and holy man a means of delivering a whole people, Prov. 11. 11. Gen. 50. 20. 1 Reg. 2. 12. 1 Sam. 17. 8, 9, 51, 52. Deut. 32. 30.

And he by his wisdome delivered the City] As one Archimedes at Syracuse, by his Art, did more towards the defence of the City, then all the rest that were in it; ἐν σοφὸν βούλευμα πολλᾶς χεῖρας νικᾶ.

yet no man remembred that poor man] This deliverance was wrought by a poor man whom no man made any account of, nor expected any such good from, being an obscure unknown person: and when he had wrought it, no man looked after him, to return him thanks for it, 2 Cor. 4. 7.

Then said I, wisdome is better then strength] As Chap. 7. 19. Prov. 21. 22. & 24. 3, 4, 5. Hereby we are taught to consider the goodness of things in comparison

one

one to another, and to prefer that which is moſt excellent, 1 Cor. 12. 31. & 7. 38. 1 Sam. 15. 22.

V. 17. *The words of wiſe men are heard in quiet, more then the cry of him that ruleth among fools*] *Are heard*, that is, ought to be heard. *As a ſon honoureth his father*, Mal. 1. 6. that is, he ought to honour him.

are heard in quiet] That is, either are to be delivered with ſubmiſſion and meekneſs, Prov. 25. 15. 1 Reg. 12. 7. Or, Are to be heard with a tractable and calm ſpirit, without pride or contradiction, Job. 29. 21, 22. Jam. 1. 21. A wiſe man ſpeaking, though without clamour, contention, or oſtentation, doth by his weighty and ſeaſonable advice, more calm the ſpirits of his hearers, and by his ſober and ſerious counſel more powerfully prevail with them, then all the angry and paſſionate words of ſuch as have more power, but no skill to manage it: *Ille regit dictis animos & pectora mulcet.*

V. 18. *wiſdome is better then weapons of war: but one ſinner deſtroyeth much good.*] Wiſdome is not only better then ſtrength, but then ſtrength armed and ſeconded with military proviſions: the poor mans wiſdome did not only deliver the City from the great King and his numerous Army, but from his bulwarks and fortifi-

cations

cations which he had raised against it.

but one sinner destroyeth much good] By the opposition between a sinner and a wise man, It is evident, that Solomons Wise man here, is also a godly man: otherwise God useth to infatuate and defeat the counsels of worldly wisdome, 2 Sam. 15. 31. Isa. 19. 11——14. Isa. 29. 14. & 44. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 19.

one sinner] Some render it, *Qui in uno peccat.* He that in war through folly and inadvertency committeth one Errour, may destroy a whole Army: for they say, *In bello non licet bis peccare.* That one Errour in Absalom in preferring the counsel of Hushai before Achitophels, did undo his whole enterprize. But it is rather to be understood in opposition to the *one poor wise man*, vers. 15. one wicked man like Achan will endanger the Camp. Josh. 7. 1——5. 1 Cor. 5. 6. as one leak in a ship, one spark in a barrel of gun-powder will suddenly undo all. One fool can throw a jewel into the Sea, which a thousand wise men cannot get up again: πολλακὶ καὶ ξύμπασα πόλις κάκου ἀνδρὸς ἐπαυρῶ. *Grex totus in agris unius Scabie cadit.*

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

IN the later end of the former Chapter, he ſhewed the excellent uſe of godly wiſdome in order unto tranquillity, both private and publick, and the miſchief which one fool might do in deſtroying much good: which laſt clauſe in that Chapter, he proceedeth in the beginning of this, to demonſtrate by three inſtances, ſhewing firſt how folly deſtroyes a good name, which he illuſtrateth by an excellent ſimiliſude, verſ. 1. Secondly, how it ſpoils a mans actions and undertakings, which by wiſdome might be dexterouſly managed, verſ. 2. Thirdly, How it defaceth a mans whole behaviour, and converſation, verſ. 3.

Then he proceedeth to ſhew the excellent uſe of true wiſdome, in relation to our behaviour towards Princes, and Perſons in Authority, whereby, through prudent Caution, meekneſs, and gracious deportment, a man may reſtrain in himſelf all thoughts, ſpeeches, or attempts tending unto rebellion, and may allay and pacifie the diſpleaſure which had been conceived againſt him, in the mind of the Ruler; whereas folly tranſporting a man into any diſloyal reſolutions, doth but ruine himſelf, and end in fruitleſs

and

and weary labour. Concerning those kind of disloyal Affections, He sheweth, First, The Rise and occasion of them, which may be double. First, Undutifull and Revengefull passions, upon any private displeasure of the Ruler against us in our own particular persons, vers. 4. Secondly, Envy or Indignation growing out of Errors in Government; when a man observes foolish and unworthy persons to be advanced, and those more Honourable and deserving to be depressed and discountenanced, vers. 5. 6, 7.

Secondly, he sheweth the great danger of Disloyalty, and that 1. In regard of actions and attempts, which usually prove pernitious to their Authors, and this illustrated by many lively similitudes, vers. 8, 9, 10, 11.

2. In regard of rebellious and foolish speeches, contrary unto that gracious circumspection and decorum which wisdome would teach a man to observe, in the which through the heat of passion, a man usually proceeds on from bad to worse, vers. 12, 13, 14. Concerning which he sheweth, 1. The mischief which they bring, vers. 12. 2. The vanity and fruitlesnes of them to the person that utters them, vers. 15. 3. The root of them, ignorance of civil affairs, and want of skill to converse with men, vers. 15. 4. The

nature

nature of them, they begin in folly, they end in madneſs, they proceed in babling, and multiplicity of words, concerning things which a man cannot foreſee or know any thing of them, verſ. 13, 14.

3. In regard of inward Thoughts and Affections; concerning which he ſheweth how little ſecurity a man can promiſe himſelf even in his moſt ſecret and inmoſt projections of diſloyalty, in as much as God hath inviſible and unexpected means to bring it all to light, verſ. 20.

And becauſe Princes might haply hereupon think themſelves free from all tye or duty towards their people, becauſe they ſhould be free from all danger and rebellion from them: He doth therefore further ſhew the neceſſary dependance which Prince and people mutually have in regard of Weal and Woe. Thereby deterring Princes from Tyranny and miſgovernment: (whereby they utterly ſubvert the end of Gods ordinance, which was for the peace and proſperity of the people.) And alſo directing them unto the right means of Government, and proper vertues requiſite thereunto, which are, 1. Wiſdome, and maturity of judgement, that be be not a child, verſ. 16. 2. Nobleneſs of mind, not only in regard of blood, but chiefly in vertuous endowments, raiſing the

ſoul

ſoul above all ſordid & baſe deſigns. 3. Temperance and ſobriety, eating and drinking to ſtrengthen unto duty, not to diſable or indiſpoſe unto it, nor to incroach upon it, verſ. 16, 17. 4. Diligent attendance, and ſuperinſpection over the houſe of the Common-wealth, that there may be no ruptures in it, but that all be ſound, and in good repair, verſ. 18. 5. Moderation in delights, not feaſt for laughter, nor ſpend the life in mirth and drinking, becauſe exceſs in theſe will require a proportionable increaſe in money and treaſures to maintain them, whence will neceſſarily ariſe oppreſſions and extortions upon the people, verſ. 19.

Verſ. 1. *Dead flies cauſe the ointment of the Apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour: ſo doth a little folly, &c.* In theſe words the wiſe man doth by an elegant ſimilitude or proverbial ſpeech, illuſtrate what he had laſt ſpoken, namely, That *one ſinner deſtroyeth much good*, as one dead flie doth corrupt and mar a whole veſſel of moſt pretious ointment, which in thoſe Countries was had in great account, 2 Reg. 20. 13. It is here applyed unto a mans good name, which is compared unto ſweet ointment, Eccleſ. 7. 1. Cant. 1. 3. and as a flie, though

though but a little creature, can taint and corrupt much precious perfume, a little mixture of folly and indiſcretion will ſtain and blemiſh the Reputation of a man, otherwiſe very wiſe and honourable. And this ſo much the rather, becauſe of the malignity and ingratitude of men, who do more haſtily cenſure one error, then value many graces, and with whom one ſmall miſcarriage doth blot out the memory of all other deſervings: as one little cloud doth ſerve to overſhadow the whole body of the Sun. Therefore it concerneth us to walk ſo much the more unblameably, that we may not by the leaſt overſight or folly blemiſh our profeſſion, or cauſe it to ſtink in the noſtrils of others, Gen. 34. 30. Phil. 2. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 1. 2 Cor. 6. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 15. much leſs by our leaven ſour the whole maſs, and derive infection upon many others, 1 Cor. 5. 6. Gal. 5. 9.

Dead flies] Flies of death, the Genitive Caſe in the place of an Adjective, Pſal. 2. 9. & 31. 3. Rom. 7. 24. Phil. 3. 21. Judg. 7. 13. 2 Theſſ. 2. 3. 2 Pet. 2. 1. This may be taken either actively, flies which cauſe death, as the plague of the Locuſts is called death, Exod. 10. 17. poyſonous flies which do render ſweet oyntment deadly and mortiferous, as inſtruments of death, Pſal. 7.

14. (*i.*) which do cauſe death: Or elſe, paſſively, flies which are dead, and by their putrifaction do taint the oyntment in the which they are drowned.

Dead flies do cauſe] The Nown is plural, and the Verb ſingular, which may properly thus be rendred, *Any one of dead flies doth cauſe the oyntment to ſtink*; as Exod. 31. 14. Rom. 1. 20. Thereby intimating the great miſchief and damage may be from very ſmall cauſes.

cauſe to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour] Heb. maketh to ſtink, exhaleth or belcheth forth; thereby noting a continual Emanation of unſavourineſs, ſo that the ſtink doth never ceaſe or give over. When two Verbs of the ſame Tenſe come thus together, Grammarians tell us, that the former hath an adverbial ſignification, as Jer. 13. 18. *Humble your ſelves, ſit down*, (*i.*) ſit humbly down. Hoſ. 9. 9. *They have made deep, they have corrupted*, (*i.*) *They have deeply corrupted*. Rom. 10. 20. *Eſay is bold and ſaith*, (*i.*) ſpeaketh boldly. So here, *fœtere fecit, eructat*, (*i.*) *fœtide eructat*. Which is well rendred in our Verſion, *cauſeth to ſend forth a ſtink*.

ſo doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wiſdome and honour] The note of ſimilitude is wanting, as in many other places,

places, both in the πρόταις, and in the ἀπόδοσις, as Prov. 11. 22. Jer. 17. 11. Psal. 125. 2.

so doth a little folly] Here is an Ellipsis of the Verb, which is to be repeated out of the former member, namely, It causeth to send forth a stinking savour; as Gen. 1. 29, 30. The more eminent any person is for wisdome and honour, the more circumspect ought he to be in his conversation, because a little folly and over-sight will much diminish his reputation; as spots are soonest observed in the whitest and finest garments, and envy (like worms and moths) doth usually feed on the purest cloath, Neh. 6. 11. Hierom and the Vulgar read the words to another sense, *Pretiosior est sapientia & gloria parva ad tempus stultitia.* That sometimes a little folly is more pretious then wisdome and honour, 1 Sam. 21. 13. But this, besides the grammatical incongruity, holdeth no proportion to the former part of the verse, whereunto it answereth, and therefore is neglected by the best Interpreters.

V. 2. *A wise mans heart is at his right hand, but a fools heart at his left*] A like kind of proverbial form we had, Chap. 2. 14. The right hand is usually the most expedite and ready for action, doth its work more

ſurely, more ſpeedily, more decently, therefore the right hand is the deareſt of the two, Matth. 5. 29, 30. and it is noted as a thing ſtrange and unuſual when men have been left handed, or able to uſe both hands alike, Judg. 3. 21. & 20. 16. 1 Chron. 12. 2. So the meaning is, A wiſe mans heart is ready and prepared unto every good work, he doth things with judgment and counſel, he doth with mature advice and deliberation ſo weigh his actions, the circumſtances, conſequences, probabilities, and events of them, as that he may not afterwards repent of his behaviour therein. He worketh by the guidance of his heart, Prov. 15. 22. Luke 14. 28—30. But a fool is left-handed in his works, doth all his buſineſs bunglingly, præpoſterouſly, inconſiderately, either when he adviſeth about buſineſs his hand is abſent, and doth not execute it; or when he worketh and goeth about it, his heart is abſent, and doth not direct it. A wiſe man hath the command of his heart, knowes how to uſe it ſeaſonably, opportunely, and in conformity to times, places, perſons, ſo that his undertakings may be ſucceſsful and proſperous: whereas a fool is tranſported with paſſion, amazed at difficulties, perplexed with uncertainties, at his wits end, and knowes not which way to take, or what to reſolve, goes about

about his buſineſs as awkwardly and undecently, as a man would do whoſe right hand were tyed behind him, and had onely his left hand to help him, Prov. 2.10——15. & 4.26. & 13.16. & 16. 22,23. Examples of this wiſdome we have in Jacob, Gen. 32. Joſeph, Gen. 41. David, 1 Sam. 16. 18. Abigail, 1 Sam. 25. Jethro, Exod. 18. 19. the Woman of Abel, 2 Sam. 20. Paul, Act. 23.6. and of the contrary folly, Numb. 14. 40——45. 1 Reg. 12.8. Iſa. 19.11——17.

V. 3. *Yea alſo when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wiſdome faileth him*, &c.] Not onely in his private actions and undertakings, but in his open converſation amongſt men, in his motions, geſtures, behaviour, gate, countenance, uſual deportment, he is deſtitute of prudence and common diſcretion, and bewrayeth the folly of his heart, by the affected fondneſs of his converſation.

and he ſaith to every one, that he is a fool] The Septuagint render it, ἃ λογίζεται πάντα ἀφροσύνη ἐστι, *whatſoever he thinketh on is folly.* Symmachus in Hierom, *He ſuſpecteth of all men that they are fooles.* Whereunto the Vulgar anſwereth, *Cum ipſe inſipiens ſit, omnes ſtultos æſtimat*, being a fool himſelf, he accompteth all other men fools: as to him that hath the Jaundies every thing

ſeemeth yellow; and to him that hath a diſtempered palate, every ſweet thing taſteth bitter; to him that hath a vertiginous brain, every fixed thing ſeemeth to turn round; ſo to a man made up of pride and folly, other men much wiſer then himſelf do appear fools. The Chaldee rendreth it, *All men ſay that he is a fool.* But the moſt emphatical is as we read it, *He ſaith to All men, That he is a fool*: He doth ſo palpably diſcover, and as it were proclaim his own folly, by his geſtures and behaviour, as if he would himſelf tell them that he is a fool, Prov. 6. 13. & 12.23. & 13.6. & 18.2. Jude verſ. 13.

V. 4. *If the ſpirit of the Ruler riſe up againſt thee, leave not thy place*] Here he ſheweth the excellent uſe of wiſdome in ordering our converſation towards Superiours, teaching us to bridle all diſloyal paſſions, to reſtrain all unlawful attempts, to keep our ſelves in the ſame eaven and unmoved temper, whatever provocations we meet with to the contrary.

If the ſpirit of the Ruler] The Chaldee hereby underſtandeth the power and dominion of any ruling luſt, by which a man ſhould not ſuffer himſelf to be ſhaken from his ſtedfaſtneſſe, nor removed out of his place, or from his duty. But this is inconſonant with the

the ſeries of this Chapter, which is much taken up in the Errours of Government, and the inconvenient paſſions which thoſe Errors may produce in the minds of the people. Others underſtand it of the ſpirit of Rule and Government, as we often read of the ſpirit of Judgment, of Prophecy, of Revelation, of Wiſdome, of Knowledg; ſo the skill of Governing, is called the Spirit of God, 1 Sam.10.10,11. & 11.6. & 16.14. Iſa.11.1,2. And they underſtand it thus, If the Lord advance thee unto high place of power and Government, Leave not thy place, continue humble and lowly ſtill, forget not thy duty towards thy brethren; as Deut.17. 15.—20. But the later clauſe of this verſe plainly leads us to another ſenſe; *If the ſpirit*, that is, the wrath and diſpleaſure of the Ruler riſe up againſt thee; ſo paſſion is ſometimes called, Chap.7.9. Prov. 25. 28. Judg.9.23. 2 Chron.21.16. And it ſeems to denote high diſpleaſure, like that of Saul, of whom it is ſaid, That he Breathed out threats againſt the Church, Act. 9. 1. His rage was as a Terrible Blaſt of a ſtorm againſt a wall, Iſa.25.4. And this is further intimated in the phraſe of Aſcending or riſing up, as a grievous Tempeſt, or as a flame of fire, 2 Sam.11.20. Ezek 24.8. Pſal. 78.21, If

the high displeasure of the Ruler be, though unjustly and injuriously, lifted up against thee, as Potiphars against Josephs; Sauls against David; Labans against Jacob; Pauls against the Church of Christ, *leave not thy place*] Contain thy self within the bounds of thine own calling and condition, do not either through fear and despair withdraw thy self from thy duty, nor through insolence and impatience, rise up in disloyalty against him, whose spirit is risen against thee; keep still in the rank of a subject, and behave thy self with that lowliness and submission which becometh a subject. He speaketh not against a prudent withdrawing from a storm, and hiding a mans self, as Jacob fled from Esau, and David from Saul, and Elias from Jezabel, and Christ from Herod, Matth. 10. 23. but of disloyal and rebellious defection, going out of his sight, Chap. 8. 3. as Israel to their Tents, 1 Reg. 12. 16. He requireth us for conscience towards God, to suffer wrongfully, and to be subject even to those that are froward, and injurious, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19. Not to violate our Allegiance, nor to attempt any conspiracy against them, but onely in our sufferings, to make our prayers and complaints known unto God, who is a Judge between them and us, and is able to vindi-

vindicate our innocency, and to deliver us out of their hands. Every man muſt keep his ſtation, as Souldiers in an Army are to ſtay in their own rank, 1 Cor. 7. 20, 21. A man cannot expect to have Gods bleſſing any where, but in his own place. His promiſes and protection are annexed unto our duty, Pſal. 91. 11. 2 Chron. 15. 2. This was the ſin of the Ten Tribes againſt the houſe of David, Hoſ. 8. 4. and of Abſolom and Sheba againſt David himſelf, 2 Sam. 15. 10. and 20. 1.

for yielding pacifieth great offences] This is a reaſon *ab utili*, to perſwade unto the duty. For whereas a man might haply conceive, that the wrath of a King is implacable, and their loſt love unreconcileable again, and that therefore their caſe being deſperate, a man were as good give over duty, as periſh under it: He ſheweth, that by ſubmiſſion and lenity of ſpirit, a man may not onely recover the favour, bnt prevent and preſerve his Prince from many offences. Some render the words *vir ſanans*, an healer, pacifieth great offences; and ſo the Septuagint, ὅτι ἴαμα καταπαύσει ἁμαρτίας μεγάλας: He that by gentle behaviour, ſeeketh to heal the wound and breach between him and his Soveraign, ſhall pacifie great offences. Or, as a man in a courſe of Phyſick, will abſtain

from those things which are hurtful unto him: so a wise man will leave off all those sins, whereby the anger of the Ruler may be stirred up against him. Wisdom is of an healing nature, Prov. 12. 18. & 16. 24. as we see in the carriage of Abigail to David, 1 Sam. 25. and of the Woman of Abel to Joab, 2 Sam. 20. others rendring it by *mollities* or *remissio*, yielding, or fainting, give a double sense of it; First, That a mans yielding to temptations and passions of disloyalty, doth cause many offences to rest on him, doth bring with it many other sins, through fainting in the day of adversity, Prov. 24. 10. Secondly, that yielding for a while unto the tempest, doth break the force of it, and cause the heart of a man to relent and to melt towards those, who do with calmnesse and humility endeavour to divert it, Prov. 15. 1. & 25. 15. As a tempest which breaketh strong Oaks that resist it, doth no hurt unto the weak Corn which yields unto it: Or as Wooll or mud, doth more abate the force of a Cannon bullet, then walls of stone that stand stubbornly against it. See Judg. 8. 1, 2, 3. Gen. 32. 13——20. & 33. 4. 1 Sam. 24. 16——19. & 25. 32, 33.

V. 5, 6. There is an evil which I have seen under the Sun, as an errour which proceedeth

eſcedeth from the Ruler, &c.] Here is intimated another cauſe of defection and rebellion againſt Princes, namely, miſgovernment, when through their errour and inadvertency, unworthy perſons are exalted, and men of eminency and deſert depreſſed.

There is an evil] Another evil, or a common evil; an evil under the Sun, in humane affairs.

as an errour] Which is indeed an errour: It is here *Caph veritatis*, not a note of compariſon, or ſimilitude, but of truth; as Judg. 13.23. Neh.7.2. Hoſ.4.4. & 5.10. Luke 22.44. By *errour*, is noted a fault committed ignorantly and through inadvertency; as Levit.4.2. Numb. 15.24. Whereby we are taught to put the faireſt conſtruction upon the faults of Superiours, in the caſe of miſgovernment; it being ſo eaſie a thing for them, who muſt ſee much with other mens eyes, and cannot poſſibly have a clear knowledg of the worth of all perſons whom they advance, but may eaſily be carried into miſtakes by the flatteries, or plauſible pretences of thoſe that ſerve them, to be deceived in their opinions, of the fitneſſe of perſons for thoſe places of truſt, wherein they do imploy them.

Folly is ſet in great dignity; and the rich ſit in low places] Fools are very highly advanced:

vanced: The abſtract for the concrete, to denote men extreamly fooliſh and wicked; as Pſal. 5.9. 1 Cor. 2.14. Phil. 3.2. Cant. 5. 16. This is matter of much grief and trouble to good men, when power is put into the hands of men, as Vice-gerents for God, who yet will uſe it all againſt him. When the great intereſts of States and Churches, ſhall be intruſted in the hands of thoſe, who have neither skill nor hearts to promote the good of them, Pſal. 12.8. Prov. 28.28. & 29. 2. Eſth. 3.1——15. This the Lord is often pleaſed in his providence to permit, ſometimes for the puniſhment of a wicked people, Job 34 30. Iſa. 19.4. Hoſ. 13.11. Zach. 11.6. Prov. 28.2. Judg. 9.23, 24. and ſometimes for the triall of his faithful ſervants, and to ſtir up in them earneſt prayer for thoſe who are in authority, that according to their duty they may be friends to thoſe that are pure of heart, 1 Tim. 2.1, 2. Prov 22. 11. Pſal. 101.6, 7, 8. And ſometimes to ſhew the greatneſs of his power in deſtroying tyrants, Exod. 9.16.

and the rich ſit in low place] This is to be underſtood in oppoſition to the former; and ſo by *rich* is meant, men of noble endowments for wiſdom and goodneſſe, Pſal. 45. 12. To ſit in low place, or in an abject and deſpiſed condition, is noted here as a poſture

of

of mourning and great ſorrow; as Jer. 13. 18. Humble your ſelves, or make your ſelves low, ſit. So Iſai. 47. 1. Ezek. 26. 16.

V. 7. *I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes, and Princes walking as ſervants upon the earth*] By ſervants, he meaneth men of a low and baſe condition, fitter to be the tail then the head, Gen. 9. 27. Lam. 5. 8. which is a thing extreamly prepoſterous and abſurd, when ſervants do bear rule, men of ſlaviſh condition are advanced above thoſe that are free, noble, and pious, Prov. 19. 10. & 30. 21, 22. Deut. 28. 43, 44.

upon horſes] This is a note of honour and dignity, Eſth. 6. 8, 9. Jer. 17. 25. Ezek. 23. 23. Hereby he meaneth, That abject and vile perſons, who ought to be under government, were exalted unto the Throne, and unto places of truſt and honour. Such an one was Athenion in Greece, who of a poor and mean perſon, grew up to be a proud and potent tyrant; laid aſide wiſe Counſellors, ſpoiled Temples and Cities, waſted men of their eſtates, and filled pits with treaſure; as Athenæus, lib. 5. repoſteth. And the like, Zenophon relateth, lib. 2. Hellenicon.

and Princes walking as ſervants upon the earth] As David ſeemeth to have walked when

when he fled from Absolom, 2 Sam. 15. 30.

V. 8, 9. *He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it, and who so breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him. Who so removeth stones, shall be hurt therewith: and he that cleaveth wood, shall be endangered thereby*] These are four Proverbial similitudes, tending all unto one end, *viz.* to shew, that evil usually returneth on the heads of those who were authors of it; ἡ δὲ κακὴ βουλὴ τῷ βουλευσάντι κακίστη. Psal. 7.15,16. & 9.15,16. Job 5. 13. Prov. 11. 5, 6. & 26.27. Esth. 7.10. 2 Sam. 17.23. Exod. 14.28. & 18.11. Obad. ver. 15. Isa. 33.1. Judg. 1.6,7. *Quod quisque alieno excogitavit supplicio, excipit suo.* He that made the fetters for another, doth many times wear them himself.

The application of this general, in the present case, is, First, against Princes, who do so advance unworthy men, and depresse the well deserving; such disorders in Government do, many times, redound unto their own sufferings, and while they oppress the people, they do supplant their own Thrones, Prov. 16.12. & 25.5. 2 Reg. 8. 8.15.

Secondly, against such as attempt to alter the long established, and wholsom Constitutions of Nations and People, and do rashly over-

over-turn the foundations of Lawes and Cuſtoms; ſuch changes are uſually mortiferous to the undertakers of them, Prov. 22, 28. & 24. 21, 22.

Thirdly, againſt the undutiful and rebellious carriages of people towards their Princes and Rulers, which commonly are pernicious unto the authors thereof, as we finde in the examples of Abſolom, Sheba, and others, 2 Sam. 18. 14. & 20. 22. 2 Chron. 23. 15. & 25. 3. & 33. 24, 25. Eſth. 2. 21, 22, 23.

he that diggeth a pit ſhall fall into it] It is a ſimilitude drawn from Huntſmen, who dig pits, and then cover them over again, as if they were firm ground, by which means the beaſts paſſing on them, fall in and are taken. Many times in the digging of ſuch a pit, the earth falls on him that openeth it. It is uſed Metaphorically, for an attempting of evil to enſnare another man, Job 6. 27. in the which ſnare many times a man is taken himſelf, Pſal. 10. 2. & 9. 15. Prov. 5, 22. Dan. 6. 24.

and who ſo breaketh an hedge, a ſerpent ſhall bite him] Serpents and Adders uſe to harbour in old walls and hedges, ſo that without much caution, he that raſhly removeth them, is in danger of being ſtung by them, Act. 28. 3. Now as hedges do incloſe grounds,

grounds, and distinguish the property of one man from another; so the Lord hath set an hedge about his own ordinance of Magistracy, which he will not have violated by any disloyal attempts, as the phrase is used in another case, Job 1. 10. Ezr. 9. 9. And all trayterous attempts against the Ordinance of God, is a breaking of that mound, and an incroaching upon that authority, which seldom escapeth some mischief or other, which the contrivers thereof did not foresee, nor were wise enough to prevent. It is a dangerous thing to confound rule and subjection, and to break down the partition wall between the one and the other. They who are impatient of rule over them, have ruine very near them.

Who so removeth stones shall be hurt therewith] He that goeth about to demolish a building, and to pull the great stones out of the walls thereof, διαπονηθήσεται; shall be put to pain and labour thereby; So the Septuagint: κακωθήσεται, shall be broken and torn thereby; So *Aquila*: κακωθήσεται, shall be hurt, and suffer evil thereby; So Symmachus. So dangerous is the attempt of those, who go about to unjoynt, and dissolve the ligaments of Government. A-like expressions we finde, Zach. 12. 13. Matth. 21. 44.

and

and he that cleaveth wood ſhall be endangered thereby] Or, *heated thereby*; The Chaldee, *ſhall be burnt thereby*: Shall not do it without danger, if his Tools be blunt, as it followeth in the next verſe. We finde mention of danger in this imployment, Deut. 19.5. 2 Reg. 6.4,5. So all theſe four Proverbial Similitudes tend unto one and the ſame end.

V. 10. *If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edg, then muſt he put to more ſtrength: but wiſdom is profitable to direct*] This ſeems to relate to the words next immediately before it. He that cleaveth wood, if the iron be blunt, ſhall be endangered and over-heated thereby, as being every ſtroke neceſſitated to put to more ſtrength, and all in vain, till wiſdom, by whetting the weapon do get the better of the wood. Nay, the more ſtrength is uſed, when the iron is too blunt to enter, the more danger there is of its recoiling upon him that uſeth it. So in the preſent caſe, the more violent and froward the paſſions of men are againſt Governours, the more danger do they create unto themſelves. Princes being like ſtrong Oaks, that are not eaſily wrought upon by oppoſition: But wiſe, mild, and gentle behaviour may break their diſpleaſure: as wiſdom directing a man to whet his iron, will with leſſe labour cleave

cleave the ſtrongeſt Timber. Like hereunto was that of Eſop to Solon, that we ſhould ſpeak unto Princes ἢ ἥκιστα ἢ ἥδιστα; either very little, or that which may ſweeten and pleaſe them.

then muſt he put to more ſtrength] Or, *then it will overcome the ſtrength of him that cutteth.* Some underſtand it of an Army; it will exerciſe and weary the whole ſtrength of an Army, to cleave wood with it. Or, in War, though the arms be blunt, ſo that ſtrength can do little good, yet wiſdom may ſupply that defect, and get the victory; as Chap. 9. 15, 16.

but wiſdom is profitable to direct] Or, *the excellency of direction is wiſdom.* The Infinitive Mood for the Noun, as *Mercer* hath obſerved; as 2 Reg. 19. 27. Pſal. 101. 3. The direction which wiſdom gives, is more profitable then ſtrength; it guideth a mans actions without ſo much toyl and labour, unto a better end. It is, of all other, the moſt excellent moderator and director of the actions of life; becauſe without it, all other means are bootleſs and full of hazard: without it labour is dangerous; there is wiſdom requiſite in the moſt ordinary and meaneſt works, in digging, in bearing burdens, in cleaving and hewing of Wood; as we read of a Porter, whom a Philoſopher took and

bred

red unto learning, becauſe he obſerved a natural wiſdom and dexterity, in his ordering of his burden for the more eaſie carriage; 1 Reg. 5. 6. Iſai. 28. 24, 25, 26. Without it ſtrength of body is uſeleſs; a blunt Axe will tire out the arm of the ſtrongeſt man, if he have not wiſdome to whet it. Art and cunning can move bodies, and apply Engines, which exceed all the ſtrength of the body alone, to ſtir or ſtand under. As we finde what huge ſtones were placed in the Temple, in our Saviours time, Luke 21. 5. Joſephus ſaith of them, that they were 12. cubits one way, and 8. another. 3. Without it, eloquence is to no purpoſe, for unleſſe a man have wiſdom to charm a Serpent before he bite, all a mans eloquence afterward will not be able to heal him.

V. 11. *Surely a Serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babler is no better*] Or, If the Serpent bite without being charmed, or before he be charmed, there is then no profit to him that is a maſter of his tongue, or an eloquent man. A mans eloquence will do him no good, after the Serpent hath bitten him; except he do wiſely charm him, before the danger be come: The meaning is, that a man ſhould by meekneſs of wiſdome, as by a charm, allay the diſpleaſure of the Ruler againſt him, before it break forth, and

and be too late to pacifie him. Or, according to the ſcope of our Verſion, A wiſe man ſhould, by meekneſs and diſcretion, charm his own bitter tongue, and ſpirit of detraction, whereby he is apt to curſe and revile the Ruler of the people. Such a vain babler whoſe lawleſs tongue is ever finding fault with Government, and ſpeaking evil of dignities, is no better then an uncharmed Serpent, Pſal. 58. 4, 5. Rom. 3.13. Or, as a Serpent bites moſt dangerouſly, which bites without hiſſing, doth not give warning of the harm, that a man might flye from it; ſo of all enemies, a ſecret detractor is the worſt.

The ſcope is, 1. To compare the ſpirit of diſloyalty and murmuring in the people againſt their Rulers, (ſo often forbidden, Exod. 22. 28. Act. 23. 4. Jude verſ. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 23.) unto the biting of a Serpent, every rebellious & trayterous ſpeech againſt thoſe who are over us by Gods ordinance and in his ſtead, is full of deadly poyſon, Ezek. 2. 6. a ſin which the querulous diſpoſition of people is very apt to tranſport them into. Exod. 15. 24. & 16. 2. and 17. 2. Numb. 14. 2.

2. To compare the wiſe and humble behaviour of men towards their offended Governours, unto an *Inchantment*, whereby that

hat ſerpentine ſpirit of detraction is allayed s an adder is kept from biting by a charm. n the Original it is, *If the ſerpent bite*, &c. We take the conditional conjunction for a Confirmation or Aſſeveration of a truth. as we likewiſe render it in other places, Pſal. 139. 19. Prov. 3. 34, & 23. 18.

V. 12. *The words of a wiſe mans mouth are Gracious: But the lips of a fool will ſwallow up himſelf.*] He here ſheweth, How the words of wiſe men are not only as a *charm* to prevent the biting of an enemy, but do further conciliate favour and *grace*.

are Gracious] Heb. *Grace*. They are ſo comely and graceful in themſelves, that they miniſter grace to others, Epheſ. 4. 29. Col. 4. 6. and obtain grace and reſpect from them. As Abigail did not onely appeaſe the wrath of David, but did greatly draw his heart and love towards her, by her wiſe and gracious words. Prov. 10. 32. & 15. 1, 2, 4, 26. & 16. 23. 24.

But the lips of a fool will ſwallow up himſelf] Or, will deſtroy, and drown him, καταποθήσον αὐτὸν; ſo the 70. the noun is plural, and the verb ſingular, which may be Emphatical, to note, that *every one* of his words do deſtroy: or do ſuddenly ruine, as a whale, or a grave, doth preſently devour that which it ſwallowes;

lowes. A fooliſh man by froward and d
ſloyal ſpeeches, layes ſnares againſt his ow
life, provokes ſo much wrath and diſpleaſur
as thereby utterly to undo, and, as it were
eat up himſelf, Prov. 19. 28. Prov. 12. 1
Rom. 3. 13.

V. 13. *The beginning of the words of hi
mouth is fooliſhneſſe, and the end of his talk
is deſperate madneſs.*] Hereby we underſtan
the Emphaſis of the former verſe, where a pl
ral noun was joyned to a ſingular verb, no
ing, that *every one* of his words, from the be
ginning to the end, tendeth unto ruine. Th
more he ſpeaks, the more folly he diſcover
and goes on from evil unto worſe, accordi
as his rage or diſtemper of minde doth fu
ther and further tranſport him. Corruptio
in the heart when it breaks forth, is like
breach in the Sea, which begins in a narro
paſſage, till it eat through and caſt down
the banks, 2 Tim. 3. 13. as the Phariſee
and other Jewes in their diſcourſes wit
Chriſt, did commonly begin with argument
(ſuch as they were) and ended with ſtone
Joh. 8. 33, 48, 59. & 10. 24, 31. Act. 6. 9
& 7. 54. 57. & 19. 28, 34. firſt they deal
fooliſhly, and then they lift up their horn
Pſalm 75. 4, 5. from reproches they go o
to oathes and madneſſe, Pſal. 102. 8. Act
21

22. 22 23. Prov. 21. 24. 2 Sam. 16. 13. Prov. 26. 18. & 15. 28. Thus a furious man abounded in tranſgreſſion, Prov. 29. 22.

V. 14. *A fool alſo is full of words: A man cannot tell what ſhall be: and what ſhall be after him who can tell him*] Beſides the madneſſe and folly of ſuch a mans diſcourſes, they are alſo many and endleſſe. A wiſe man is contented with words enough to expreſſe his mind, he ſpeaks alwayes pertinently ſuch things as may bring glory to God, and miniſter grace to the Hearers. He ſpeaketh with choyce & election, and therefore in meaſure and moderation. As the Orator gives this for the reaſon why learned men do not make ſo long and tedious Orations as others of weaker parts, *quia doctis eſt electio & modus*: They chooſe a few things out of many, and weigh their words before they utter them. Whereas fooles pour out all that offers it ſelf; *verbis humidis & lapſantibus, in ore non in pectore natis deſluunt*; as he ſaid, Prov. 15. 28. & 29. 11. & 10. 19. Eccleſ. 5. 7. nature hath given a man but one tongue, and that well fenced in; but two ears, to teach us to be *ſwift to heare and ſlow to ſpeak*, Jam. 1. 19.

a fool multiplyeth words] Uſeth many boaſting diſcourſes, vainly reporteth his own undertakings

dertakings and purpoſes, brags what he will do, and what he ſhall have, as if all events were in his own power; whereas no man, much leſſe a fool, can either tell himſelf, or underſtand by any other man, what ſhall be after him. There ſeemeth to be an Emphaſis in the word, *After him*, He boaſteth what he will do, whither he will go, what ſucceſſe he ſhall have, the next moneth, or the next year, when haply the next moneth or year may be After him, he may be cut off before it come, Pſal 49. 11, 18. Luke 12. 19, 20. Jam. 4. 13——16. Eccleſ. 3. 22. & 6. 12.

The words may haply be a *Mimeſis*, ſetting forth the humour of ſuch a garrulous perſon, who ſaith, *A man cannot tell what ſhall be after him*; and then ſaith it over again, *what ſhall be after him who can tell him?* therefore let us indulge to our genius, eat and drink, and enjoy our pleaſures while we have time to enjoy them. The former ſenſe ſeemeth righteſt.

V. 15. *The labour of the fool wearieth every one of them, becauſe he knoweth not how to go to the City.*] Having ſhewed the many attempts of fooliſh men, both in deeds and words, He here diſcovereth the vanity and fruitleſneſſe of them all. All his boaſting projects

projects and undertakings prove but labour in vain. As the Sodomites being ſmitten with blindneſſe, wearied themſelves to find out the door, which they could not get to, Gen. 19. 11. He tyreth and wearieth out himſelf in matters which are moſt eaſie, and yet cannot overcome them: for even children can find out the way into a City when they are neer unto it. Or, though he have not wit enough to keep a high rode, yet he will be wearying of himſelf in abſtruſer things, which are as difficult as to foreſee future and contingent events: as in the former verſe.

The ſenſe ſeemeth to be much like that, verſ. 10. as there the fool puts to all his ſtrength to cleave knotty wood with blunt tooles, and all in vain; whereas a little wiſdome to whet his Iron, would make his work both more eaſie, and more effectual: ſo here the fool, like an ignorant Traveller that hath miſſed his way, goes up and down to little purpoſe, till he quite weary himſelf, and yet can never find the way into the City for want of skill, or a guide to direct him, which otherwiſe would have been moſt eaſily and ſpeedily done. Where wiſdome is wanting to direct our actions, labour will be endleſſe, we ſhall ſooner weary our ſelves,

then effect any thing by blind endeavours. If we understand the words in a civil sense consonantly to the other passages of the Chapter before, then those words, [*because he knoweth not to go into the City*] do signifie the Ignorance of such a man to converse with men, or to behave himself wisely in civil or political relations: Whereas true wisdome is to understand our way, and to make strait paths for our feet to walk in, and to have the light shine on our wayes, whatever relation we stand in, or whatever imployment we are called unto, Prov. 14. 8. Heb. 12. 13. Psal. 5. 8.

V. 16. *Wo to thee, O Land, when thy King is a child, thy Princes eat in the morning.*] The Wise man is not onely careful to keep *Subjects* from rebellion and disloyalty, (which was the matter of the greatest part of the Chapter before,) but also to mind *Princes* of their duty, that they be not wilful, sensual, tyrannous, but that they manage their office with nobleness of spirit, with temperance, and industry, and that by a most mighty argument, because They cannot be good or bad to themselves alone, multitudes are concerned in it, and the weal or woe of whole nations doth depend upon it. A wicked Prince is a great argument of Divine displeasure

ſure againſt a whole people, 1 Sam, 8.6—— 18. Iſa. 19.4. Job 34.30. Prov. 28.2. And a good Prince an argument of his Love, and that he intendeth to bleſſe ſuch a Nation, 1 Reg. 10.9.

when thy King is a child] He meaneth not ſo much in age; for many have in their tender years, by the fear of God, and the help of prudent Counſellors governed their people aright, and ſome of them much better then afterwards, 1 Reg. 3.7——12. compared with 1 Reg. 11.4. 2 Chr. 24.2,3,17, & 25.1,2,14,27, & 26.3,4,5,16. But in *underſtanding*, in *experience*, in *manners*, when a man childiſhly ſuffereth the affaires of a Kingdome to be turned upſide down, to be broken to peices by his careleſneſſe, and through want of prudence & skill to diſcern between right and wrong, Epheſ. 4.14 Heb. 5.13. Iſa. 3.4.1. Cor. 14.20. Such a child was Rehoboam in the ſtrength of his age, A child of one and fourty years old, 1 Reg. 14.21, 2 Chron. 13.7. when a man is, 1. Ignorant or forgetfull of his duty.

2. Changeable and eaſily turned out of it with every perſwaſion.

3. Paſſionate, eaſily angry, and fearful, and accordingly alterable upon ſuch ſudden impreſſions.

4. Senſual, and given unto vain delights.

5. Craving and covetous, and ſo eaſily turned aſide by gifts.

6. Vain and ſubject to be flattered by thoſe who know how to make a prey of him.

Theſe and ſuch like impotencies, argue childiſhneſſe in one that Governs. The wiſe man inſtanceth in one principal of theſe, *viz.* Senſuality, in the next words.

And thy Princes eat in the morning] Though the King be a child, yet if he have prudent and vigilant Counſellours their care may recompence and ſupply his defects, but where they likewiſe be as bad as he, Prov. 29. 12. where all other miniſters of State follow onely their private gain and pleaſure, without any regard unto publick welfare, no wonder if ſuch a Nation have a wo hang over it.

eat in the moring] Are riotous, luxurious, ſpend their whole time in ſleep, and exceſſe, Riſe not up unto ſervice, but unto delights, conſecrate the flower and beſt of their time (which ſhould have been given to God, and to the publick) to their own vanity and riot. Jer. 21. 12. Iſa. 5. 11, 12. Hoſ. 7. 3, 4, 5, 6. Act. 2. 15. Prov. 31. 4, This is matter of patience unto the afflicted people, vvhen they

they conſider, that God doth thus reprove Kings for their ſake, Pſal. 105.14.

V. 17. *Bleſſed art thou, O Land, when thy King is the ſon of nobles; and thy Princes eat in due ſeaſon, for ſtrength, and not for drunkenneſſe.*] The *ſon of nobles*, that is, men trained up, inſtructed, and ſhaped with principles of true Nobility, wiſdome, and holineſs. As a *ſon* of death, of perdition, of wrath, is one devoted thereunto: ſo a *ſon of nobles*, is one nobly ſeaſoned with principles of honour and Government. As ſons of God, Gen. 6.2. men bred in the Church of God, and under a godly Education; ſons of the Prophets: ſons of Phyſitians, men bred in ſuch profeſſions.

of nobles] From a word which ſignifieth *whiteneſſe*, either becauſe perſons of honour did uſe to wear white rayments, Eſther 8. 15. Rev. 3.4. ſit in white thrones, Rev. 20. 11. ride on white aſſes, Judg. 5.10. or to denote the purity of manners which ſhould be in Rulers, that they might be examples of all integrity unto others, Rev. 19.8. By *ſons of nobles*, then, he doth not underſtand men barely born of noble Parents, and who have noble blood in their veins, (ſuch an

one likely might the child be of whom he ſpake in the former verſe) but as there he meant a child not in years, but in manners and qualities: (as the words Presbyter, Elder, Antient, in the Scripture uſe, do not ſo much ſignifie age, as wiſdom, and authority,) ſo here he meaneth one noble as well in vertue, as in blood and birth. This is the true *nobility*, when piety, wiſdome, righteouneſſe, courage, and the fear of God, do adorn the royal blood, and render perſons truly illuſtrious, and not dark and obſcure creatures, as mean perſons are, Prov. 22. 29, Deut. 1. 13. Exod. 18. 21. nobility of blood, without nobility of vertue and holineſſe, addeth nothing to a Govenour at all, Pſal. 16. 3. & 47. 9. & 87. 3, 4, 5. 6. & 110. 3. Act. 17. 11.

and thy Princes eat in due ſeaſon] In the time of eating, after they have ſpent their ſtrength in duty: As to every thing there is a *fit time*, Eccleſ. 3. 1. ſo to this particular of eating and drinking, Pſal. 145. 15. Matth. 24. 45. Labour and ſervice ſhould go before eating, Luk, 12. 35, 37. & 17. 7, 8, 9. Abrahams ſervant would not eat till he had done his buſineſſe, Gen. 24. 33. and our Saviour preferred his own Fathers work before his own Refection, Joh. 4. 31, 32.

Some-

Sometimes even wicked men have been ſo intent on their wickedneſſe, as to deny liberty of eating, drinking, and other refreſhments, to themſelves, till their deſigns were to be accompliſhed, Act. 23. 12. Prov. 4. 16. and ſo we find Magiſtrates ſo ſerious in duty, as to forbear eating, and to forbid it even ſometimes when it was neceſſary, Ezra 10.6. 1 Sam. 14.23. Temperance is in no calling more requiſite, then in the Calling of a Magiſtrate, Prov. 31. 4. Multitudes of buſineſſes, and thoſe of greateſt importment, and ſuch as do often require immediate conſultation and diſpatch, (and ſuch are many times the affaires of States) will not allow liberty of eating and drinking, all delights muſt be laid aſide to attend them. Exod. 12. 34. 39. It was wickedly done by the King and Haman to ſit down to drink when the City was in perplexity, Eſter. 3. 15. to let publick ſafety lye ſtill, while private luxury was ſerved.

for ſtrength, and not for drunkenneſſe] The end of eating, is to repaire that ſtrength which had been weakened in duty, and ſo to enable unto the attendance upon duty again. It ought not to be the *end* of our living, but onely a neceſſary *means* unto life, and unto the ſervices thereof.

And therefore Gluttony and Drunkeneſſe are to be avoyded, as by all men, becauſe of many other evils which are in them, ſo in ſpecial manner by Princes & Rulers, becauſe they do totally indiſpoſe for ſuch weighty affaires as are to be managed by wiſdome and counſel, Iſa. 28. 1. Hoſ. 4. 11. & 7. 5.

V. 18. *By much ſlothfulneſſe the building decayeth: and through idleneſſe of the hands, the houſe droppeth thorow.*] This is a proverbial form of ſpeech, and appliable unto all kind of buſineſſes, ſhewing the danger of idleneſſe and procraſtination in them. And it is here uſed as an illuſtration of what he had ſaid verſ. 16. to ſet forth the miſery of a Land under childiſh and careleſſe Government, by a Compariſon drawn from the *leſſer* to the *greater*, from an *houſe* to a *State*; for as an *houſe* being expoſed to wind and weather, will in time drop thorow, and ſo endanger the rotting of the Timber, and the ruine of the whole, if the owner thereof do not by timely repairs prevent ſuch a miſchief: ſo the *Common-wealth*, being expoſed to various dangers, from the ſubtilty and hoſtility of enemies abroad, and from the rebellion, ſedition, and various diſcontents of

of ill-affected people within it ſelf, will be continually in danger of diſſolution, if Governours, who ſhould be the *Healers*, *Repairers*, and *Builders* thereof, be not exceeding vigilant upon its preſervation and ſafety: which if he be, he will have little time left for luxury and intemperance.

Here then, 1. A *State* or *Kingdome*, is compared to an *Houſe*, as ſometimes the Church is, 1 Cor. 3.9. Epheſ. 2.21. & 3.15. Heb. 3.2——6. 1 Tim. 3.15. nothing more uſual, then to call the Kingdome of Iſrael, The Houſe of Iſrael, the Houſe of Jacob, &c. Iſa. 2.6. & 5.7. Luke 1.33. Obad. verſ. 18.

2. *Princes* are compared unto the *Maſters* of the Family, and to thoſe unto whom it belongeth to Heal and Repair the ruines and breaches in that great building, Iſa. 3.7. Job 34.17. Iſa. 58.12. & 61.4. As elſewhere to *foundations*, Pſal. 82.5. Βασιλεῖς *quaſi* Βάσις τῦ λαῦ. to *Coverings*, Ezek. 28. 16. to *Barrs*, which keep a houſe from being broken open, Hoſ. 11.6. to the *Coignes*, or Corners in a Building, which keep the *Compages* of a ſtructure together, Iſa. 19. 13.

3. Miſgovernment is compared unto careleſneſs,

leſneſs in an Houſe-keeper, or Steward, that doth not in time prevent thoſe ruines in an houſe, which a few breaches uncured, will quickly draw after them. Which, to ſhew the greatneſs of it, is called in the *duall* number, double ſlothfulneſs, or the *ſlothfulneſſe of both hands*: and ſo the 70. ἐν ἀκηνίαις, by ſlothfulneſſes. The *Building* decayeth, is viciated, weakned, disjoynted, ſinketh, inclineth; the 70, ταπεινωθήσεται, is brought low: a proper expreſſion, being ſpoken of the roof of the houſe: and ſo the word is rendred, Pſal. 106. 43. Job 24. 24. *And through idleneſs of the hands*, ſo the 70, ἀργία χειρῶν; the word is, through the humility, abjection, demiſſion, *hanging down* of the hands, that do not put themſelves forth, nor lift themſelves up unto labour; as Heb. 12. 12. Exod. 17. 12. The like expreſſions whereunto we have, Pſal. 76. 5. & 74. 11. Prov. 6. 10. & 19. 24. & 26. 15. Prov. 10. 4.

the houſe droppeth thorow] Which firſt cauſeth the walls and timber to rot, and ſo tendeth unto ruine; and ſecondly, cauſeth a mans habitation to be irkſome and uncomfortable unto him, Prov. 19. 13. & 27. 15.

V. 19.

V. 19. *A feaſt is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money anſwereth all things.*] Theſe words, if taken *abſolutely* and alone, are to ſhew the dominion of *money* in humane affairs above all other things; other common things, even the beſt of them, Bread and Wine, (whereby the Scripture uſeth to expreſſe moſt outward contents) have a definite and limited uſe, proper to themſelves, diſtinct from others. They tend to make men laugh and be merry, but *money* is the *meaſure* of *all things*; It will feed, and cloath, and harbour, and purchaſe, and extend as a civill Inſtrument unto all ſecular proviſions. But they ſeem rather to bear *Relation* to what went before; ſlothful men intend not the ſupportance of their houſes, families, or eſtates, but they ſpend their whole time in feaſtiug and luxury, and all that, not out of any ſtore which by their provident labours they had laid up, but by the conſtant expence of treaſure, and emptying of their baggs, whereby at laſt their houſes, families, eſtates, are wholly brought to ruine.

Some joyn the words unto the former, thus; *Through idleneſſe of the hands of th ſe*

men

men the houſe droppeth thorow, who make feaſts for laughter, and prepare wine to make their life merry, and whoſe money doth readily anſwer all theſe greedy luſts and deſires of theirs, and doth bring in ſupplyes and fuel into them. So this Verſe looketh back to verſe 16. ſhewing the Cauſe of the Woe there pronounced againſt a Land whoſe Princes were luxurious, and by whoſe ſlothfulnes in regard of publick ſervice, the Houſe of the State was ready to decay and drop thorow; for by riot and exceſs, which cannot be maintained without vaſt proportion of treaſure to anſwer all the exigences of them, ſuch Princes are conſtrained to cruſh and oppreſs the poor people, and to ſqueeze them with heavy exactions, Jer. 22. 13—19. which is unto the hearts of the people as a continual dropping in a ruinous houſe, cauſeth them either through ſadneſs of ſpirit to fall and deſpond, and ſo to become an abject and low condition'd Nation, Ezek. 17. 13. 14. 2. Reg. 15. 20. or elſe ſtirreth them unto more reſolute practiſes, to ſhake off the yoke which they are not willing nor able any longer to bear, 1 Reg. 12. 14, 15, 16.

They make a feaſt for laughter,] So *facere*

tere panem, vitulum, agnam, are expreſſions uſed for dreſſing of ſuch things towards a feaſt or entertainment, Dan. 5. 1. Gen. 18. 7, 8. 2 Sam. 12. 4.

and wine maketh merry] *Lætificat vitam,* maketh a mans life merry, as elſewhere *Lætificat Cor,* giveth him a merry heart, Pſ. 104. 15.

But money anſwereth all things] LXX. ὑπακούεσθαι πάντα. Whereunto agreeth the Vulgar, *pecuniæ obediunt omnia,* Money can command all things, to wit, which are meaſurable thereby. It being the Inſtrument and element of Commerce, as the Philoſopher calleth it. Symmachus, ἐυχρηστήσει εἰς ἅπαντα. Is profitable for all things, which may be bought therewith: or *Exaudit omnia,* It heareth the deſires of men, when men deſire ſuch things as they outwardly want; If they have money, that ordinarily can anſwer this deſire, and procure thoſe things for them: a like expreſſion we find, Hoſ. 2. 21, 22.

V. 20. *Curſe not the King, no not in thy thought: and curſe not the Rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air ſhall carry the voice, and that which hath wings ſhall tell the matter.*] Becauſe by occaſion of ſuch

ſpeeches

ſins of miſ-government in evil Princes, men might be very apt through impatiency of ſpirit, to break forth into diſloyal thoughts and affection towards them, however they might haply be by fear of danger reſtrained from ſeditious ſpeeches, or rebellious practices: He therefore concludeth this whole Argument with a ſtrict prohibition of all hard and undutiful thoughts and riſings of heart againſt Rulers, notwithſtanding their Errors in Government, and Corruptions in living, not ſo much as ſecretly in their hearts to wrong them, both for conſcience ſake, and for fear of wrath, as the Apoſtle likewiſe directeth, Rom. 13. 5.

Even in thy *thought*, or in thy *conſcience curſe not the King*] Entertain not any light, vain, contemptuous or diſhonourable thoughts of him, do not wiſh any evil to his perſon, crown or Government, not ſo much as in thy inmoſt and moſt ſecret retirements, Exod. 22. 28. 2 Pet. 2. 10. Pſ. 62. 4. 1 Sam. 10. 27. 2 Sam. 19. 21. 1 Reg. 2. 8. Iſa. 8. 21.

The ſecond clauſe, *neither curſe the Rich*, is a re-enforcing of the ſame precept again, meaning by the *Rich*, the Governour, Iſa. 53. 9. *In the chambers of thy bed*, or, in thy moſt ſecret retirement.

And leſt a man ſhould preſume ſo to do,

as

as conceiving thoughts to be free, and far enough out of the ſight of the Governor to obſerve or avenge, He addeth the great danger like to enſue by means which they could not ſo much as imagine, or ſuſpect.

[*for a bird of the air ſhall carry the voice, and that which hath wings ſhall tell the matter*] As if he had ſaid, Thy thoughts and ſecret curſes are heard in Heaven, by him who will certainly puniſh them, however ſecret they are kept from men. And the Lord can eaſily find our waies even by bruit Creatures, to bring them to light: as he did rebuke the madneſs of *Balaam* by his *aſſe*, 2 Pet. 2. 16. and puniſh the pride of Pharaoh and Herod by *frogs*, *lice*, and *worms*, Exod. 8. 6, 17. Act. 12. 23. We read how a flight of Cranes did diſcover the murther done upon the Poet Ibycus: and how Beſſus, who had ſlain his father, overthrew a neaſt of ſwallows chattering, becauſe, ſaith he, they accuſe me for killing my father. As our Saviour ſaith in another caſe, *If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the very ſtones would cry out*, Luke 19. 40. So the Lord can by even dead and inanimate Creatures, diſcover wickedneſs. The earth it ſelf, which drank blood in, ſhall diſcloſe and reveal it, Gen. 4. 11. Iſa. 26. 21. Hab. 2. 11. The Chaldee by *birds of the air*, underſtand the

Angels

Angels of Heaven, who like winged Eagles ſhall make report of ſecret wickedneſs. Others underſtand it of fame, which is a ſwift, and as it were a winged Meſſenger; alluding unto that which is ſaid of Princes, πολλοὶ βασιλέων ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ πολλὰ ὦτα. That Princes have many Eyes, & many Ears, and long arms, that can ſee, and hear, and puniſh offences at at a greater diſtance.

CHAP. XI.

IN the former Chapter he ſhewed the excellent uſe of true wiſdome, as a means of Tranquillity of mind, and remedy againſt the vanity of outward things, in ordering our behaviour aright towards Superiors for prevention of thoſe dangers which their diſpleaſure may ſubject us unto. In this Chapter he further diſcovereth the uſe thereof unto the ſame End of comfortable living, in ordering of our behaviour towards Inferiors, thoſe eſpecially that are in want.

Concerning which, we have, Firſt, the precept it ſelf, concerning ſubſtantial and uſeful charity, verſ. 1. with an effectual reaſon thereof, both drawn from a Metaphor of ſowing and reaping ſeed, verſ. 1.

Secondly, the manner and meaſure of this our charity, which is to abound towards all that

that are in want, and that enforced by a reaſon drawn from the uncertainty of future Events; now thou art able; hereafter thou mayſt be diſabled, therefore do good while thou haſt means ſo to do, and thereby provide friends to thy ſelf againſt any evils which thou alſo mayſt fall into, verſ. 2.

Thirdly, Both thoſe are illuſtrated by many *ſimilitudes*, in the which he doth by way of *Prolepſis* prevent ſuch objections as the covetous hearts of men are apt to make againſt this duty.

1. A man is apt to ſay, That he is neereſt to himſelf, and muſt look after his own ſupplyes, and leave others to look after theirs.

To which he anſwereth, That as *Clouds* are not filled with waters to keep them to themſelves, but to empty them upon the Earth: ſo Gods bleſſings are not depoſited to men only for their own good, but as Stewards they are to diſpence out of them unto others; verſ. 3.

2. It may be objected, If I muſt relieve *ſeven and eight*, take notice of the wants of many, It will be ſeven to one if much of this bounty will not be caſt away upon unworthy and ungrateful perſons, who will make no return either unto God or man for it.

To this he anſwereth, That as it is all one

to

to the maſter of *a tree*, whether it fall *North* or *South*, for either way it falls to the owners uſe and benefit: ſo that good which is done to any man in want, out of a deſire thereby to honour God, and to help our neighbour, ſhall prove beneficial unto him that ſo doth it, whatever the perſon be unto whom it is done, verſ. 3.

3. It may be objected, That it is not yet a ſeaſon to be thus bountiful, there are many Impediments and diſcouragements thereunto, This charge, this loſs; that affliction or danger, or expence lyes upon me, when I am gotten over theſe, it will then be a fitter time to think on the wants of others, when I am ſecured againſt mine own.

To this he anſwers by another *ſimilitude* drawn from *husbandry*, He that will not ſow his ſeed leſt the wind ſhould blow it away, nor reap his corn, leſt the Clouds ſhould rain and wet it, ſhall never want exceptions againſt that which yet is neceſſary to be done. Therefore our duty is to embrace the preſent opportunity, and leave the ſucceſs for the future unto Gods bleſſing.

If we could certainly fore-ſee better weather, and more ſeaſonable accommodations for our buſineſſes to morrow than to day, we might haply pretend ſome reaſon for delay of duty. But that is in Gods hand alone, as

as unknown unto us, as the way of the wind, or of the ſouls coming into the body, or the growing of the bones of an Embryo in the womb. Therefore it is our duty to do good at preſent while we have opportunity, and to commit the ſucceſs of all for the future unto God, verſ. 4, 5. Whereupon he repeateth the Exhortation in the ſame Metaphor, ſow thy ſeed, ſcatter thy charity in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, in youth, in age, at all times, on all occaſions, ſince thou knoweſt not which will be moſt ſucceſful, verſ. 6.

And now having thus largely ſet down various precepts for making the life of a man comfortable, and his mind quiet amidſt all the vanities of the world, He proceedeth to inſtruct him how he may provide for death, and judgement, and ſo ſecure happineſs in another world too: for a man might be apt to ſay, when I am thus throughly fitted by theſe many precepts unto a ſecure and comfortable manner of living, having the favour of great men, the bleſſing of poor men, peace within, and plenty without, when by godly wiſdome, vexation of mind, and the vanity and diſquietneſs thereupon of all outward things is healed, and removed. It cannot then but be a very pleaſant thing to live, to ſee the light of the Sun, and to enjoy thoſe con-

contents which by these means we have arrived at, vers. 7. To this the Wise man answereth, That albeit by these means life is much sweetned, and the vanity thereof is much abated, yet it is never throughly removed: But when all is done which can be done to render our condition here comfortable, yet *All that cometh*, both *life*, and the supplyes thereof, are still *Vanity*, and will pass away, and the *daies of darkness* which follow, will be abundantly more than the daies of light which went before. And that therefore we ought, by the timely remembrance of them both, to moderate our delights in things present, and to prepare our selves to lift up our heads with comfort in the judgement to come, vers. 8.

And because of all others, young men, whose blood is fresh, and spirits active, are most apt to surfeit on present pleasures, and to put far from them the evil day, slighting such admonitions as these; therefore the Wise man, who had had himself as full a gale of youthful pleasures, as ever any other man, and had found the vanity of them all, doth by an *Irony*, *deride* the folly, and by a solemn *citation* unto the Tribunal of God, *awaken* the conscience of such a voluptuous Epicure, vers. 9. perswading him by the assurance of a future *judgement*, wherein he must be cal-

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led to a ſtrict account for all the vanities and miſcarriages of his youth: and by the flitting condition of that age wherein he doth ſo glut upon them, to remove far from himſelf thoſe ſinful exceſſes which would fill his heart with ſorrow, and his fleſh with ſin.

Verſ. 1. *Caſt thy bread upon the waters: for thou ſhalt find it after many daies*] This is a proverbial form of ſpeech, drawn from the manner of *husbandmen*, who ſow their land in expectation of a plentiful harveſt, after many daies. Whereby the Wiſe man, in purſuance of his principal argument, touching *tranquillity* and comfort of life, doth perſwade unto *liberality* towards the poor, that their mouths and bowels may bleſs us. Some make it an alluſion to *Merchants*, who ſend their Eſtates in Ships upon the Sea, expecting in time a return with much gain, called the *Harveſt of the River*, Iſa. 23. 3. if the Prophet do not rather there allude to the plenty of Egypt, by the over-flowing of the River, whereunto poſſibly the Wiſe man may likewiſe allude in this place. Others, more generally, underſtand it of giving alms to the poor, where all we do, may ſeem to be *caſt away*, as if it were thrown into the Sea. Though thou think, what is ſo given, is all loſt, becauſe given to thoſe who can never

never recompence thee; yet do thou lend in that manner, looking for nothing again, Luk. 6. 35. being assured, that what is thus given to the poor, is *lent unto the Lord*, Prov. 19. 17. who will in his time, certainly repay it with advantage unto thee. But I rather take it to be an allusion unto *seed*, which is sowed on very *fertil ground*, which is neer a river, or is made fat by the over-flowing of a river, Numb. 24. 7. Isa. 32. 20. So they used in Egypt to make their land fertil, by drawing the water, when the river flowed over, by art unto it, Deut. 11. 10, 11. Therefore amongst other plagues, which the Lord threatneth Egypt withal, this is one, That *their Rivers should be dried up*; and *that which was sowed by them, should wither*, Isa. 19. 5, 6, 7. and so we read of the *seed of Sihor*, Isa. 23. 3. which was a River in Egypt, Josh. 13. 3. Jer. 2. 18. By casting the bread *upon* the waters, we understand, *by* or *neer* the waters; as Ps. 1. 3. Gen. 41. 1. because those places are the most fertil. When he saith, *thy bread*, he thereby teacheth us, that our charity must be out of our *own* estate, and according to that condition wherewith God hath blessed us, Eph. 4. 28.

for thou shalt find it after many daies] The seed which a man sows seemeth to dye and

and periſh, but the husbandman waiteth patiently for many daies together, and at laſt he reapeth a plentiful harveſt, Jam. 5. 7. as Iſaac did, Gen. 26. 12. Mark. 4. 8. And in like manner, that which is ſowed in the bellies and backs of the poor, will be repayed, as the ſeed is in harveſt, manifold into the boſoms of righteous men, Prov. 19. 17. 2 Cor. 9. 6——10. Deut. 15. 10. Matth 19. 22. Pſ. 112. 9.

V. 2. *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight: for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth*] By *waters*, is ſometimes in the Scripture meant, *multitudes* of people; as Iſa. 8. 7. & 17. 12. Revel. 17. 15. and the Wiſe man here bidding us to caſt our bread *on the waters*, doth in this verſe explain what he meant thereby, namely, that we ſhould diſperſe our good works, and almſ-deeds unto *many*, that we ſhould be large hearted, and open-handed unto the poor.

Give a portion] He alludeth unto the manner of their *feaſts* and entertainments in old times, when they did uſe to diſtribute portions to their gueſts, and to ſend to the poor, 2 Sam. 6. 19. 1 Sam. 1. 4, 5. Gen. 43. 34. Eſth. 9. 22. Nehem. 8. 10. 12. Iſa. 58. 7. Whereunto our Saviour haply alludeth, when he ſaith that Mary had cho-

ſen

ſen ἀγαθὸν μερίδα; A good part or portion, Luk. 10. 42. Which cuſtome of diſtributing equal portions to the gueſts, we find in Homer and Plutarch, to have been obſerved likewiſe among the Grecians; as alſo the cuſtome of ſending portions from the Tables of greater perſons, to thoſe that were abſent. Vide Stuck. Antiq. Conviv. lib. 3. cap. 3.

to ſeven and alſo to eight] That is, to *many*: a definite number, for an indefinite, 1 Sam. 2. 5. Job 5. 19. Mic. 5. 5. So hereby is noted, large and cheerful liberality to all in want, according to our abilities. We may not think we have done our duty, when we have been charitable to one or two perſons; but we muſt diſperſe our bounty, as ſeed that is ſown; and do good unto all men, according to their need and to our condition, cheerfully and inceſſantly. The *neceſſity* of a man may require it, when his *perſon* doth not deſerve it, Luk. 6. 30. 2 Cor. 9. 5——10. Gal. 6. 10. Iſa. 23. 18. Prov. 31. 20.

for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth] Embrace the preſent opportunity of doing good, thou canſt not fore-ſee how ſoon thou mayſt be deprived of it, ſince thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth, Jam. 4. 14. Prov. 27. 1. & 3. 27, 28. Luk. 12. 20.

12. 20. Haply thou mayſt dye, and leave thy wealth to thoſe who will ſhut up their bowels againſt the poor; however, what they do ſhall not be put on thy account. Thou art a ſteward of thy eſtate, no longer than for thine own life; and therefore be thine own Executor, and conſider the *wants* of the poor at *preſent*, therefore let not thy *bounty* be only *future*. Haply God may diſable thee another time, from doing that good which now he puts into thy hand. It is wiſdome to do *Gods work in Gods time*. Haply thou thy ſelf mayſt fall into want, and ſtand in need of help from others; therefore make thee friends of Mammon before hand, Luk. 16. 9. Pſ. 37. 26. & 41. 1, 2, 3. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19.

V. 3. *If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themſelves upon the earth: and if the tree fall towards the South, or towards the North, in the place where the tree falleth, there it ſhall be*] He urgeth the duty of charity and bounty, by elegant *ſimilitudes*. *Clouds* that are full of moiſture, do not keep it to themſelves, but ſhed it forth in ſhowers on the earth, and on all kind of corn, and herbs for the benefit of many; whence they are called the bottles of heaven, Job. 38. 37. and the chambers of the Lord: Pſ. 104.

13. from whence he poureth down rain according to the vapour thereof, Job 36. 27, 28. ſo ſhould rich men, Prov. 11. 25. whom the Lord hath filled with his bleſſings, as the Scripture uſeth to expreſs it, Deut. 33. 23. Job 22. 18. Prov. 5. 10. Deut. 6. 11. Prov. 30. 9. Phil. 4. 12. 18. not keep Gods bleſſings to themſelves, but pour them forth upon thoſe that are empty.

and if the tree fall, &c.] This ſome apply unto death, as if we were thereby warned to do good while we may, becauſe death will at laſt cut us down, and deprive us of any further opportunity, Eccl. 9. 10. Joh. 9. 4. and as death leaves us, judgement will find us. But it ſeemeth rather to denote the benefit of charity unto the authors thereof, that whereſoever their bounty and mercy is placed, there it will be found again to their comfort; they ſhall not go without their reward, as the tree on which ſide ever it falls, it will there be found, when the owner thereof inquireth after it.

V. 4. *He that obſerveth the wind, ſhall not ſow, and he that regardeth the clouds, ſhall not reap*] By theſe ſimilitudes, he preventeth all thoſe pretences and objections which carnal hearts are apt to make againſt

againſt the preſent ſeaſon of doing good, and are apt thereby, to defer and put it off to ſome fitter time, when they ſhall have found out more fitting objects on which to place their bounty. We are very apt to frame excuſes againſt *preſent duty*, Hag. 1. 2. Act. 24. 25. Prov. 3. 27, 28. Here therefore the Wiſe man removeth theſe pretences; He that will by every wind be deterred from ſowing his ſeed, leſt it ſhould be blown away; and by every cloud from reaping his corn, leſt the weather ſhould be unſeaſonable, ſhall never do his buſineſs; becauſe there will never be wanting ſome diſcouragement or other: ſo he that is ever framing carnal objections againſt doing good, ſhall over-ſlip the ſeaſon, and never do his duty, nor receive his reward. We are to take notice of the *preſent call* of God unto any good work, and the preſent opportunity he puts into our hands, and not delay ſervice upon the fear of future contingents, which are not in our power, Matth. 6. 34.

V. 5. *As thou knoweſt not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with Child: even ſo thou knoweſt not the works of God who maketh all*] By our ignorance of the works of Gods providence, he warneth us to be diligent in embracing every *preſent* opportunity

tunity of doing good, and not to defer or delay duty, till haply the Lord will put us out of all capacity to do it. This ignorance he proveth a *minori*, If we know not things more ordinary and familiar unto us, which happen every day, as *the way of the ſpirit.*] Symmachus rendreth it, of the *wind*, which way it comes and goes, how it riſeth and ſlackneth, Joh. 3. 8. Or how the *ſoul* comes into the body, and quickneth it; ſo the Septuagint, ὁδὸς τοῦ πνεύματος; Or, *how the bones do grow*; How the ſeveral parts of the body, skin, fleſh, ſinews, bones, ſome hard, ſome ſoft, are all ſhaped out of the ſame ſeed, Pſal. 139. 13——16. Job 10. 10——13. Much leſs are we able to foreſee the works of Gods providence, which are far off and exceeding deep, Chap. 7. 24. Therefore ſince we know not what ſhall be to morrow, how God may diſpoſe of our life or our eſtate, how long he may continue unto us opportunities of doing good, we ought not to defer or put off duty from time to time, but while we have a *preſent* ſeaſon, to embrace it, Chap. 9. 10. Gal. 6. 10.

V. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whether they both ſhall be alike good*] He inferreth from the former doctrine

ſtrine, of the uncertainty of future events, an hortatory concluſion, to be doing good on all occaſions, and to be aſſiduous and diligent in the work which God hath ſet us to do, whether all our labour take effect or no. The Lord being ſometimes pleaſed to fruſtrate mens endeavours, and to defer the ſucceſs they expected from them; First, to try them whether they would perſevere in their calling: and *continue therein with God*, though they had not alwayes alike incouragement. 2. To teach them, that ſucceſſes depend not upon the *labours* of man, but upon the *will* and free bleſſing of God. And he perſiſteth in his former Metaphor of *ſowing ſeed*; meaning thereby, First, in particular works of charity and mercy to the poor; as verſ. 1——4. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Pſ. 112. 9. Secondly, In general, works of righteouſneſs in our general or particular callings, Prov. 11. 18. Hoſ. 12. 10. Thereby teaching us, that works of mercy and righteouſneſs do not periſh, but will bring forth an harveſt of comfort, and great reward unto thoſe that abound in them, Gal. 6. 8.

ſow thy ſeed] Do thine *own* work, intend thine *own* calling, intermix not thy ſelf in things which belong not unto thee, 2 Theſſ. 3. 10. 1 Theſſ. 4. 11. Be liberal of thine *own* eſtate, Epheſ. 4. 28.

In the morning ſow——and in the evening withhold not thine hand, or let not thine hand reſt or give over.] *Begin* betimes, and be not weary of well doing, but *continue* unto the end; be alwayes doing of good, *morning* and *evening*, note the *whole* day from one end of it to the other, Gen. 1. 5. Dan. 8. 14. Pſal. 104. 22, 23. So Solomon bids us, *be in the fear of the Lord all the day long*, Prov. 23. 17. It is to be underſtood of the *morning and evening* of a mans *life*, which ſhould be wholly conſecrated to God, Lam. 3. 27. Eccleſ. 12. 1. Pſal. 92. 14. Matth. 10. 22. or of the *morning and evening* of a mans *proſperity*; as ſoon as ever God giveth thee an eſtate, begin to do good with it, and be not weary of ſo doing, but continue to the end. God requires our charity to be ſet about on the firſt day of the week, 1 Cor. 16. 2. Gal. 6. 9, 10. The night is ſhut out of the time of working, or of duty, therefore while it is day, while we have life and opportunity, we muſt ply our duties, Eccleſ. 9. 10. Joh. 9. 4.

for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, or whether will be moſt right, or congruous, the one or the other, &c.] Thou maieſt juſtly expect a bleſſing upon all, however, though the ſucceſs, as to men, be not alwaies proſperous; ſometimes thy bounty is miſ-

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placed upon thoſe that abuſe it, or return evil for good, yet with God, conſtancy in well-doing will not miſs of its reward; and by this largeneſs heart, thou maiſt unawares entertain Angels, and bring extraordinary bleſſings upon thy family, Matth. 10. 14, 42. Heb. 13. 2. 1 Reg. 17. 13——16.

V. 7. *Truly the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun*] By light, and beholding the Sun, we are to underſtand the time of this *preſent life*, as is evident by what follows in the next verſe; ſo Job 3. 20. & 33. 30. and withall, we may take in thoſe pleaſures and *comforts* thereof, which ſerve to render it more ſweet and contentfull. Some make it to be a tacit objection, againſt that continual labour which he before preſcribed. Since life is ſhort, we ought to uſe all the wayes we can to render it pleaſant, and not weary out our time and ſtrength in continual toyl and labour; it is much more ſweet, to enjoy the light and pleaſures of life while we may, 1 Cor. 15. 32. whereunto they make the words of the next verſe to be an anſwer; That when death comes, the good we have done will remain with us, but all our pleaſures and delights will vaniſh into nothing. It may ſeem to relate unto the former verſe, as well as to that which follows; ſow your ſeed in the

morning, and in the evening, ſo long as you have the light of the Sun to guide you; for this is the chief comfort and ſweetneſs of life, to be doing good while we have time & opportunity, becauſe the dayes of death and darkneſs are coming, wherein we cannot work.

But it ſeemeth rather to be a *Tranſition* unto a new matter. In the former parts of this book, the Wiſe man had ſet forth the vanity of all outward things, and had preſcribed many gracious and excellent means to remedy the ſame, and to frame the heart of man unto *Tranquillity* and peace. But now when by theſe precepts the life of man here is rendred as full of comfort, and quietneſs, as an earthly condition is capable of, yet though his *life* be never ſo *ſweet*, there are *great evils* coming, which will require much meditation and preparation of heart to fit a man for them: and there is a *far longer condition* for the future, which will abide us after this life is gone; neceſſary therefore it is unto the compleating of that happineſs whereinto he had all this while inquired, to ſecure not only the comforts of this life, but the aſſurance of a better, which is the buſineſs of Solomon in the remaining part of this Book, by a timely meditation of *death* and *judgement*, and by the fear of God, and keeping his commandments in our youth,

to

to arm us againſt the terror of future evils, and to fit us for that happineſs, which is the whole of man, and which will be throughly proportionable to his largeſt deſires. And ſo the meaning is this, It is true indeed, to enjoy the *light of the Sun*, and the comforts of this preſent life, is a very ſweet thing: *Senſually* ſweet unto thoſe, who are voluptuous; *Solidly* and ſubſtantially ſweet unto thoſe, who by all the foregoing precepts, have gotten wiſdome to cure the vanity and vexation of ſpirit, which otherwiſe outward things are apt to produce; yet both the one and the other muſt remember, that though life be *ſweet* under the Sun, yet it is not *long*, much leſs, perpetual; *dayes of darkniſs are* to come, therefore unto compleat happineſs there is yet more to be done, and ſuch an eſtate to be ſecured, as may bear full proportion to the capacities of an immortal ſoul, and may make up the *Whole of man*.

Light is Sweet] Sweetneſs here is that properly which is the object of our Taſte, Judg. 14. 18. Prov. 24. 13. but it is uſual in the Scripture to attribute that which is proper unto one ſenſe, to another; as to ſee thunder, Exod. 20. 18. to ſee the ſmell of a field, Gen. 27. 27. It is a broken and conciſe ſentence, unto which ſomething is to be added or underſtood, it is *indeed ſweet*

to ſee the Sun; life is pleaſant, *but* yet it is *vanity*, and will end in death; by the meditation whereof, we are to abate our inordinate love of the profits and pleaſures of ſo vaniſhing a condition.

V. 8. *But if a man live many years, and rejoyce in them all, yet let him remember the dayes of darkneſs, for they ſhall be many. All that cometh is Vanity*] Though it be a ſweet thing to enjoy life, and the comforts thereof, and though a man ſhould live long, and all that long life ſhould have his full of worldly delights, yet the ſerious meditation of death, and the long abode we ſhall after all thoſe pleaſures have in the houſe of darkneſs, will ſufficiently demonſtrate the vanity of Temporal life, how long, or how proſperous ſoever it have been; ſuch a life we find deſcribed, Job 21. 7——13. By *dayes of darkneſs*, are underſtood in oppoſition to light; and the ſeeing of the Sun, in the former verſe, that ſpace of time wherein men ſhall lie in the duſt, Pſal. 88. 12, 13. Pſal. 143. 3. Eccleſ. 6. 4. Job. 10. 21.

for they ſhall be many] This ſome apply to the firſt words of the verſe, though the dayes of life be many, yet let a man remember the dayes of darkneſs, and that will make him judge all things which happen in this world to be but vanity: we may likewiſe

wiſe read the words thus; If a man live many years, let him rejoyce in them all, he is not debarred the comforts and contents of them, but let him withall temper and moderate the joyes of life, with the meditation of death, and know that *every thing* which hapneth, that *every man* which cometh into the world is *vanity*.

V. 9. *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes: But know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgement.*] Since all that cometh is vanity, as well youth as age, both which he ſheweth here and in the next Chapter: And ſince the dayes of life and jollity here, how long ſoever, are very ſhort and inconſiderable, in compariſon of the dayes of darkneſs which follow after them, he therefore perſwadeth thoſe who are moſt ſubject to be tranſported with the pleaſures of life, to remember *death and judgement*, and thereby to reſtrain their inordinate deſires. A young Epicure, who is ſcornfull and impatient of ſuch cooling and chill doctrines as thoſe of *death and judgement*, might be apt to ſay; if the *dayes of darkneſs* be ſo *many*, let us not make them more then they are by denying our ſelves the pleaſures of

of light, but let us freely indulge to our ſelves all our delights, and live to the length of our deſires, 1 Cor. 15. 32. whereunto Solomon anſwereth in theſe words, 1. By way of *Conceſſion*, 2. By way of ſad and ſevere *præmonition*. The *Conceſſion* ſome would have to be real and ſerious, as if he had ſaid, I would not diſcourage thee from the uſe of lawfull pleaſures, nor debar thee ſuch contents as the flower of thine age do call for: only I would have thee carefull not to exceed the bounds of temperance and moderation, but by the vanity of things preſent, and certainty of future judgement, to compoſe thy mind to ſobriety in enjoying, and to a readineſs to depart from theſe vain delights, as Gal. 5. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 16. enjoy pleaſures, but be not drowned in them; uſe honeſt delights, but be not a ſlave unto them: Thou ſeeſt that all here is Vanity, that the faſhion of this world, the power, wealth, honour, pleaſures, ſtrength, health, beauties thereof, all vaniſh and paſs away, & that all of us muſt be brought before Gods tribunal; and all our actions undergo a ſevere tryal: therefore let it be thy chiefeſt care to provide for that account. But the place is much more Emphatical, if we underſtand the Conceſſion *Ironically*; as 1 Reg. 18. 27. & 22. 15. Ezek. 28. 3, 4. Matth. 26. 45. Since thou art

art wilfull and ſcornfull, take thy courſe, *Rejoyce in thy youth*; or, becauſe thou art young, ſtrong, healthfull, and thy bones full of marrow, Job 21. 23, 24.

And let thine heart cheer thee] Symmachus, ἐν ἀγαθῷ ἔστω, Let it be wholly in good, or in delights.

and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes] Do what thou pleaſeſt, let thy wanton and wandring eye enflame the luſts of thy heart, and let thy ſenſual heart give law to thy whole man, deny not thy ſelf any thing which heart can wiſh, or eye look on, Numb. 15. 39. 1 Joh. 2. 16. 2 Pet. 2. 14. & 3. 3. Ezek. 23. 16. Joſh. 7. 21. Jer. 18. 12. Pſal. 81. 12. Job. 21. 7. Thus ſharply doth the Lord deride the pride and folly of young men in their career of Luſt and Vanity, and as it were give them over to their own hearts deſires, Prov. 1. 24—28. Rom. 1. 28.

But know thou] Though thou Endeavour to blind thine own eyes with ſenſual delights, to ſmother thy conſcience, and to baffle thoſe principles of fear and reſtraint which God hath planted in thee; Though thou wouldſt not ſee, yet thou ſhalt ſee and know to thy coſt, Iſa. 26. 11. 1 Reg. 22. 25. 2 Pet. 3. 5.

that for All theſe things] For all the ſins, vanities,

vanities, and exceſſes of thy youth, for all thoſe things which are now ſo gratefull to thy ſenſes, though they pleaſe thine eye, they will gnaw and ſting thy conſcience, Job. 13, 26. Pſal. 25. 7. God, whoſe Word and fear thou now deſpiſeſt, from whoſe eye thou canſt not hide thy ſins, from whoſe Tribunal thou canſt not withdraw thy conſcience; *will bring thee*] Perforce whether thou wilt or no, when thou ſhalt in vain call to Mountains and Rocks to hide thee, Rev. 6. 16. Luk. 23. 30.

into judgement] The Judgement of the *great day*, Jude verſ. 6. called the *Terrour of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Act. 17. 30. the conſideration whereof ſhould abate the heat of luſt, and cauſe the heart of young men to tremble at the wrath to come.

V. 10. *Therefore remove ſorrow from thine heart, and put away evil from thy fleſh: for childhood and youth are vanity*] This is not to be underſtood Ironically, as the former words of the verſe foregoing, nor in that ſenſe; but ſeriouſly, as a ſeaſonable precept unto young men, who are, of all other men, by reaſon of the heat of their blood, ſubject unto *paſſions*, and unto *pleaſures*; the one ſeated in the *heart*, the other in the *fleſh*; from both which, he doth here forewarn them.

Remove ſorrow, or *anger* and *indignation* from

from thine heart] If we read it *ſorrow*, then hereby is meant all thoſe ſinfull pleaſures which though the deceitfull heart look on as matter of joy, yet will certainly fill the heart with ſorrow at the laſt, Prov. 14. 13. If *Anger*, or Indignation, then the meaning is, that he ſhould reſtrain all Inordinate paſſions and perturbations of mind, eſpecially take heed of ſwelling or ſtorming at the will and wayes of God, or at any ſerious advice minding him thereof, James 1. 19. Job 6. 24.

and put away evil, ſinfull luſts, *from thy fleſh*] From thy bodily members, Rom. 6. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 15. 2 Cor. 7. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 22. and ſo ſome underſtand the word *fleſh*, in the ſenſe as it is uſed, Ezek. 16. 26. & 23. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 10. Jude verſ. 23.

for childhood and youth are vanity.] The reaſon of this advice, drawn from the vaniſhing condition of youth, and the pleaſures thereof: Youth is but as the Aurora or early morning of a day quickly gone, from thence to noon, and from noon to night, therefore care ſhould be uſed to ſpend it in ſuch a manner, as that we may have an abiding fruit, and pleaſure which will not vaniſh with the years which were conſumed in the purſuance of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

IN this Chapter the Wiſe man proceedeth to demonſtrate this Vanity of youth and old age, which quickly run into Death, And then concludeth the whole Book.

He had before by an Emphatical Ironie, deterred Young men from thoſe inordinate paſſions, and ſenſual pleaſures, which that ſlippery age is moſt ſubject unto, and that by the Conſideration of that dreadfull account which in the laſt Judgement God will require of them. And becauſe that age of of all other is moſt apt to put the evil day far from them, aud to look on Death and Judgement as at a great diſtance, (as evil men uſe to do, Ezek. 12. 27. 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4. Amos 6. 3.) therefore he doth by a *Prolepſis* prevent that ſhift; Young men might be apt to ſay, the things you preſs us unto are good, but we ſhall have time enough before Judgement come, to think of them, old age will be a fit ſeaſon to draw off from the world, and to draw nigh to God. Solomon here perſwades from ſo dangerous a Reſolution, ſhewing the neceſſity of ſeeking and ſerving God in our youth, in regard old age will be very unfit to begin ſo great a work in.

Whereupon he ſheweth, 1. The Vanity of

of Old age, ſetting it forth by a large and an elegant Allegory, and by other expreſſions, Verſ. 2——6.

2. He preſſeth the ſame duty by another argument: from the approach of death, which taketh away all means of Repentance and converſion, verſ. 7. And having thus by an Induction of many particulars ſhewed the Vanity both of the Creatures here below, and of the Condition of man under the Sun, who, were they never ſo excellent, could not long enjoy them; He doth conclude the whole book, 1. With reſuming his firſt concluſion, verſ. 8. 2. By vindicating the truth of his doctrine therein, and in other his Writings, by arguments; 1. From the Pen-man of them, His Piety, he was a penitent Convert; His wiſdome: His fidelity in teaching the people: His diligence, in ſeeking out choyce matter to teach them: His ſucceſs in compoſing many excellent and profitable Sentences for their furtherance in Piety, Vertue, and Prudence, verſ. 9.

2. From the Quality of the doctrine which he taught, which he commendeth, 1. Abſolutely, and for it ſelf, in regard, 1. Of the pleaſantneſs. 2. The uprightneſs. 3. The truth of it, verſ. 10. 4. The Efficacy of it, ſet forth by two ſimilitudes of goads, and of nails.

nailes. 5. The Authority of it, 1. In regard of the office of those who dispence it, they are Masters of the Assemblies. 2. In regard of the great Shepherd of the sheep, by whose Spirit it was revealed, vers. 11.

2. He commendeth it Comparatively, from the Vanity of all other studies and learning without this; All other Books are made without end or number, and read without Satisfaction or Content; by these a man may be admonished; by others he can be onely wearied, vers. 12.

And having thus demonstrated the Doctrine he had in this book delivered, he closeth the whole with a most grave and solemn conclusion, containing, 1. A summary abridgment of the means of perfect Happiness and Tranquility of mind, in two words, fear and obedience, fear of God in the heart, as the root; Obedience to his Will in the life, as the fruit of that holy fear, vers. 13.

2. A strong Motive thereunto drawn from the future Judgment, upon which and that final sentence of Absolution or Condemnation then to be pronounced, the everlasting Happiness or Misery of Man standeth, vers. 14. He will bring *every work* to Judgment, therefore *keep his Commandements*: He will bring *every secret thing* to judgment, therefore

fore *fear him*, and ſanctifie him in your hearts.

Verſ. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them*] *Remember*] We are naturally apt to forget God, and not to retain him in our knowledg, but to live as it were without him, Pſal. 10.4,5. Epheſ. 2,12. and this moſt of all, when Earthly and Senſual objects draw the heart with a ſtronger attraction; therefore the Wiſe man having diſſwaded young men from youthful luſts, doth here exhort them as a neceſſary means thereunto, to *Remember their Creator*, To ſet the Lord alwayes before their eyes, Pſal. 16.8. to be in his fear all the day long, Prov. 23, 17. To compoſe themſelves unto his ſervice, to keep in memory, to hold faſt, to ponder, and ſtir up the thoughts of him, and deſires towards him in their hearts, 1 Cor. 15.2. Tit. 1.9. Prov. 4.4. Luke 8.15. Deut. 11.18. Pſal. 119.11. Luke 2.51. This *Remembrance* imports love, deſire, obedience, *Verba notitiæ connotant affectus*, Pſal. 119.55. Iſa. 26. 8, 9.

We find Two Pſalms amongſt Davids, with this Inſcription, *To bring to Remembrance*,

brance, ſo careful was he not to forget the dealings of God with him, Pſal. 38. 1. & 70. 1. for this purpoſe were *Sacraments* inſtituted, Exod. 12. 42. 1 Cor. 11. 24. *Feaſtivals* ordained to keep alive the memory of mercies, Eſth. 9. 27, 28. Stones and *Monuments* erected for the remembring of Gods goodneſſe, Joſh. 4. 6, 7. the Law written on *door-poſts, fringes, frontlets*, to be kept ever in mind, Deut. 6. 7, 8, 9. for this purpoſe God hath appointed his *Ordinances*, and given his *Spirit* to his Church, to put them in remembrance, 2 Pet. 1. 12. 1 Tim. 4. 6. Joh. 14. 26.

thy Creator] This word includeth many reaſons, why God ought to be remembred and ſerved by us.

1. *He made us, and not we our ſelves*, and we owe our ſervice to him from whom we receive our Being, Pſal. 100. 2, 3. Remember he made all things *for himſelf*, we are *of him*, therefore we muſt live *to him*, Prov. 16. 4. Iſa. 43. 21. Rom. 11. 36. & 14. 7, 8.

2. He made us after *his own Image*, to know him, and to have ſpecial intereſt in him, and acquaintance with him; and being made like him, we are the more obliged unto his ſervice, Eph. 4. 23, 24.

3. By that Power which created us, we are continually preſerved; if he withdraw it,

it, we preſently periſh, *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* The more vigour and ſtrength we have, the more ſenſible we ſhould be of that Divine ſupportance, which continueth it unto us, Act. 17. 27——30. Pſal. 104. 28, 29.

4. He who hath power to *create*, hath power to *deſtroy*; and he will ſhew the ſame Almighty power, in deſtroying thoſe, who live not ſuteably to the ends of their Creation, 1 Sam. 2. 6, 8. 2 Theſſ. 1. 9. This creating power of God, ſhould teach us to fear him. Jer. 5. 22.

in the dayes of thy youth] The choiceſt time of thy life, Lam. 3. 27. Prov. 22. 6. 2 Chron. 34. 1, 2, 3. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Pſal. 119. 9. therefore God required, that the *firſt ripe fruits* ſhould be dedicated unto him, Exod. 23. 19. and the *firſt born*, Exod. 22. 29. And his ſacrifices he would have to be *young*, Exod. 12. 5. & 29. 1. Lev. 4. 3. We enjoy mercies in our youth, therefore we ſhould do duty in our youth; we expect eternal life from God, therefore we ſhould not withdraw any part of our temporal life from him. He requireth to be ſerved with all our ſtrength, therefore we may not put him off till our ſtrength is gone.

before the evil dayes come, &c.] If thou wilt

wilt have God to pity and help thee in thy evil dayes, thou muſt ſerve him in thy good dayes. The dayes of old age, are called *evil dayes*, *ætas mala*, in Plautus, becauſe they bring many pains and troubles along with them: *vitæ hyems*, the Winter of our life, as Solon called it, *nam res plurimas, peſſimas cum advenit affert*. As the dayes of youth are called, *ætas bona*, in Cicero, and *ætas optima* in Seneca: Becauſe then nature is ſtrong and vigorous, and doth moſt fully enjoy it ſelf. Thine old age will bring evils enough of its own, Do not thou bring upon it the bitterneſs and burden of all thy youthful follies; repentance is a hard work, when thy ſins are fewer, and thy ſtrength greater: When infirmities bend thy back, do not keep thine iniquities to break it. Since the dayes of old age will be evil dayes, Lay up as many graces as thou canſt to ſweeten it, as many comforts as thou canſt to ſtrengthen thine heart againſt the evils of it. Gather, in Summer, againſt ſuch a Winter as this, Prov.10.5. That old age may not be to thee an evil age, but as it was to Abraham, a *good old age*, Gen.25.8.

And the years wherein thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them] This ſeems to be added, as an aggravation of the evil of thoſe evil

evil dayes, that if they be lengthened into *years*, yet all that while a man can finde no matter of pleaſure or content, whole years together ſhall be full of wearineſs and ſorrow. So Job complains of the length of his miſery, that he poſſeſſed moneths of vanity, Job 7.3. and Ezekiah, Iſai.38.12,13,15. The very *ſtrength* of the years of an old man, is all labour and ſorrow, Pſal.90.10.

V. 2. *While the Sun, or the light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkned: nor the clouds return after the rain*] Theſe words may be underſtood either *Literally*, or *Allegorically*, as thoſe that follow. *Literally*, the meaning is, That unto old men, by reaſon of the decay of their ſenſes, even the lighteſt bodies ſeem to be darkned; they look upon the Sun at noon through the clouds and ſcales which are over their own eyes. And whereas it is a pleaſant thing to behold the Sun, Chap.11.7. this ſhall miniſter no delight at all unto them: Light is little worth unto a man that is in miſery, Job 3.20, 23. *Allegorically*, It is by ſome underſtood ſo, as that the Sun, Moon, Stars, Light, may refer unto *ſome parts in man*, ſignified thereby; (as the other parts of the Allegory enſuing do) and thus: Firſt, the Chaldee Paraphraſe referreth it unto the *face*, and eyes;

Before

Before the glory and beauty of thy face be changed, and the light of thine eyes be darkned, and the comelineſs of thy cheeks be abated, and the Apples of thine eyes, the Stars of thy countenance be extinguiſhed; and thine eye-lids drop down tears, as Clouds after rain. Secondly, others underſtand it of the weakning of the inward vigour of the Soul, and *rational faculties*: Underſtanding, Perſpicacy, Memory, Judgment, Fancy; all which in the nature of man, anſwer to the cœleſtial Lights. Others, by Sun, Moon, Starrs, and Light, underſtand the various ſorts and degrees of *proſperity* and *joy*, which men meet with in their younger years: and ſo the ſenſe to be, *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, before thoſe evil dayes come*; wherein all thy light ſhall be turned into darkneſſe, all thy proſperity into ſorrow, before greater and leſſer comforts do all fail thee, and thy dayes and nights be full of trouble and darkneſs, one calamity (like ſtorms in the Winter) coming upon the neck of another. *Proſperity* is uſually in Scripture compared unto the Sun, and to light, Judg. 5. 31. 2 Sam. 23.4. and in greater proſperity, then uſual the light of the Moon is ſaid to be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun ſeven fold, Iſai. 30.26. & 60, 20. And on the

the other ſide, when great afflictions, ſuch as ſwallow up all former joy and contentments, come upon a man; the Scripture expreſſeth it by the obſcurity, blackneſs, and falling of the Sun, Moon and Stars, Iſa. 13. 9,10,11. & 24.20——23.& 34.3,4. Jer.4. 23,24. & 15.9. Ezek.32.7,8. Joel 2. 10. & 3.15. Amos 8. 9. Matth. 24. 29. And this ſenſe ſeemeth moſt genuine, as expreſſing the reaſon, why the days of old age are evil days, and years wherein a man hath no pleaſure, becauſe, both *day* and *night*, the life of ſuch a man is full of darkneſſe and trouble. Therefore mention is made of *Sunne*, and of *Moon* and *Starrs*, to note the inceſſant pains, aches, troubles, weakneſſes which this age is afflicted with, Job. 7. 4, 13, 14, 18, 19. Pſal. 32. 4.

nor the clouds return after rain] This likewiſe may be underſtood generally of the troubles of old age; in the former ſenſe, to note the continual returns of them day and night. A *proverbial ſpeech*, expreſſing the conſtant ſucceſſion of one grief, pain, diſeaſe, calamity, after another; as when the Wether is ſet in to rain, one cloud is no ſooner blown over, but another ucceeds and brings more rain. *Velut unda ſupervenit undæ.* Others, underſtand it of the *Catarrhs*, and *deſluxions*, which by reaſon of natural weakneſſe, and

want of heat to concoct them, do ſtill aſcend from the ſtomack to the head, and from thence fall down upon the breaſt and lungs; ſo that the head is ever rainy, never ſerene.

The former ſenſe ſeems moſt pertinent, becauſe in this verſe, is a general deſcription of the miſeries of old age, the particular ſpecification whereof follows in the reſt. For as Uſurers, before the whole debt is paid, do fetch away ſome good parts of it for the loan: ſo before the debt of death be paid by the whole body, Old age doth by little and little take away ſometimes one Senſe, ſometimes another; this year one Limb; the next another; and cauſeth a man, as it were, to dye daily. No Sun can diſpel the clouds and ſorrowes of old age, but Chriſt, who is the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and the bright Morning Star, Mal. 4. 2. Prov. 4. 18. Rev. 22. 16.

V. 3. *In the day when the keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves, and the grinders ceaſe, becauſe they are few, and thoſe that look out of the windows ſhall be darkned*] The Body is here compared to an *Houſe*, or Caſtle, ſo elſewhere called, Job. 4. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 1. which hath *watchmen* and *Keepers*, to preſerve it from being broken open. By theſe, ſome

ſome underſtand the *outward Senſes*, which obſerve any danger approaching, and give timely notice of it to have it prevented. Others, the *inward Faculties* of Memory, Wiſdome, Providence, which take ſpeciall care of the common ſafety. Others, and the moſt, The *Hands* and *Arms*, which are the principal inſtruments, which the Body uſeth in repelling any evil from it. Others, underſtand the *Ribs*, whereby the vital parts are fenced and hedged in, that danger may not eaſily come near them: As the expreſſion is, Job 10.11. Though the Verb, *Tremble*, ſeem to carry the ſenſe chiefly unto the *Hands* and *Arms*, which are more ſubject unto palſies, and ſhakings; yet it is not amiſs to take in many of the other: The *Head*, the ſeat of the Senſes, as the Watchman; the *Arms*, as the Souldiers in a Caſtle; the *Ribs*, as the Walls and Works which ſerve to defend it: All which are much ſhaken and weakned in old age.

and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves] The *Leggs* and *Thighs*, which were wont to carry the body upright, ſhall now falter and ſhrink under their weight, and buckle for feebleneſs, Iſai. 35.3. Or, the *Back*, which is the ſtrongeſt part of the body for bearing burdens, ſhall bow and ſtoop under

its own weight. Symmachus rendreth it, διαφθαρῆναι, ſhall periſh, or be corrupted; the Septuagint, διαστραφῆναι, ſhall be perverted, ſhall, as it were, trip up and ſupplant one the other with crooked and unſteady motion. The old Wife in the Comedian, excuſed her ſlow and faltering pace, becauſe ſhe carried a very heavy burden, the weight of ſeventy four years. *Cajetan* underſtandeth it *literally*, when the ſtrongeſt men that are do fail, and ſtoop through weakneſs.

and the grinders ceaſe becauſe they are few] *Dentes molares*, the great *jaw-teeth*, wherewith we grinde our meat, ſhall ceaſe and be unable to work, becauſe they *are diminiſhed* and made few, or becauſe they *do diminiſh* their grinding, being ſluggiſh and dull, both for want of ſtrength in themſelves, and of appetite in the ſtomach.

and thoſe that look out of the windows ſhall be darkned] The Vulgar, *per foramina*, through the holes; as Zach. 14.12. It is elſewhere rendred, Windows, 2 Reg. 7. 19. Iſai. 60.8. Gen. 8.2. So it is underſtood of the *dimneſs of the eyes* in old men, Gen. 27. 1. & 48.10. *Solomon Glaſſius* in his *Rhetorica Sacra*, by *Windowes* underſtandeth *Spectacles*, which for weakneſs of ſight, aged men are neceſſitated to uſe: *Cajetan* applyeth

eth it to *all the Senſes*; and by *foramina*, underſtandeth the holes of the Ears, Noſe, Mouth, as well as of the Eyes. All theſe for want of vital ſpirits, being blunted and dulled in their exerciſe. But the words [*looking out*] and [*darkned*] plainly limit the meaning unto the *ſight* onely, which through the want of ſpirits, dryneſs, and ineptitude of the Organes, hardneſs of the membranes, defluxion of humours, and other inconveniences, is much weakned in aged men. So that it is noted as a ſtrange thing in Moſes, that when he was a hundred and twenty years old his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated, Deut. 34.7. and the like we read of Caleb, Joſh. 14.10,11.

By theſe Infirmities, we ſhould be taught, in our younger years, to provide and lay in comforts againſt them, and not to truſt in the ſtrength of our own Arms, which are ſo eaſily broken, but to make the Lord our Arm, and his Right hand our Keeper, whoſe Arms are everlaſting, Iſa. 33.2. Deut. 33.27. Pſal. 121. 5. Not to reſt upon our own bottom, nor ſtay onely upon our own ſtrength, by which no man ſhall be eſtabliſhed, 1 Sam. 2.9. but to make the Lord our ſtay and ſupport, in whom there is everlaſting ſtrength: He is eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, he giveth power to the faint, and to them

that have no might, he increaſeth ſtrength, Pſal. 18. 18. Iſai. 26. 4. & 40. 29. & 41. 10. Pſal. 145. 14.

V. 4. *And the doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreets, when the ſound of the grinding is low, and he ſhall riſe up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of muſick ſhall be brought low.*] Various interpretations are given of theſe particulars. Some underſtand the firſt clauſe, *literally*, The doors of the houſe, by which he was wont to go into the ſtreets, to viſit his friends, to walk up and down about his buſineſs, ſhall be now ſhut up; He ſhall, by reaſon of his many infirmities, keep within doors, and abſtain from all publick meetings, wherein, in his younger years, he was wont greatly to delight. Others, refer it *allegorically* to the *Body*, here compared to an Houſe, the doors whereof towards the ſtreet, are, in old age, ſhut up, and made uſeleſs. Whereby many things are underſtood, Firſt, The *two Lips*, which are the doors of the mouth outwardly, Pſal. 141. 3. The word is in the dual number. Or, The *Mouth*, which is the door of the heart: This may be applyed, both unto *eating*, and unto *ſpeech*, unto the *Oeſophagus*, and the *Arteria*, the paſſages for the meat to go down to the ſtomach, and for the breath to go to the lungs,

lungs, called *fiſtula cibaria*, and *fiſtula ſpiritalis*. Theſe pipes are haply here compared unto the ſtreet, or paſſage down into ſeveral parts within the body, which have doors or covers, that open one way, and ſhut another way when we eat and drink, that our food may go right to the ſtomach, and not away to the lungs. Theſe doors in old age are, through weakneſs, ſhut up, and as it were off from their hinges, do not ſo pliantly and readily do their proper office, as they were wont to do. Whence difficulty of ſwallowing, and difficulty of ſpeaking; unto which two, moſt of the interpretations of this place may be referred. Some by theſe *two doors*, underſtand the *Eye-lids*, when they are weak, and hang down over the eyes. Others, *All the Senſes*, which are the outward doors, by which objects enter, and are admitted to the Soul. All which, in old age, are ſo weakned, and unuſeful, that they do very little ſervice.

The next Clauſe, ſeems moſt to favour that ſenſe, which, by *Doors*, underſtands the paſſages of the meat down into the ſtomach, and of the voice from the lungs, unto both which uſes, the Teeth are greatly ſubſervient.

when the ſound of the grinding is low] This ſome apply unto *Hearing*, when that growe

weak. Others, unto the *Concoction of the ſtomach*, when that is decayed: but the moſt probable interpretation, is that which applies it to the *Teeth*, which being few, and weak, cannot readily cruſh and break harder meats, and ſo make a leſſer ſound in eating, then young men do; *frangendus miſero gingiva panis inermi.* When the Teeth are gone, the lips are compreſſed, the mouth falls down, the organs of feeding and ſpeaking are much diſabled. They who take the former clauſes literally, joyn the ſenſes thus together, Old men ſtay within doores, and walk little abroad, becauſe the weakneſs of their appetite and digeſtion doth cauſe them to eat little, whereby their ſtrength is much abated, neither do they for this reaſon care to go to feaſts, or merry meetings, all deſires and delights being in them wholly decayed and broken.

and he ſhall riſe up at the voice of the bird] At the chirping or ſinging of any little bird] An expreſſion of the little ſleep which old men have, by reaſon of the coldneſs of the ſtomach, and difficulty of Concoction, ſending up fewer vapours to the brain, or leſſe benigne, ſo that they are eaſily awakened with every little noiſe. It may alſo be underſtood of his wearineſs to lye long in his bed, by reaſon of leanneſſe and aches, ſo that he

he is willing to riſe as early as the birds leave their neſts.

and all the daughters of muſick ſhall be brought low.] By *daughters of muſick*, we may underſtand, Firſt, Some organs of the body tending unto muſick, either to ſing our ſelves, as the *arterie* for ſpeaking, thoſe *fibra vocales* which are bended and inflected in ſinging; or the *ear* which judgeth of ſounds, as the palate of meats, when we hear others ſing; or ſecondly, All kind of *muſical conſort and harmony*, vocal or inſtrumental, which young men greatly delight in, as Solomon did, Eccl. 2. 8. but to old men are little delightful, they can neither ſing themſelves, nor are greatly pleaſed with the muſick of others, 2 Sam. 19. 34, 35. By theſe defects we are inſtructed in the daies of our youth, to open all the doors of our heart to let Chriſt in, that in old age he may be with us, and when our appetite faileth us, he may ſup with us, Rev. 3. 20. and when our ſleep faileth us, he may give us reſt; and when all other delights are worn out, a good conſcience may be a continual feaſt, Prov. 15. 15. and may give ſongs in the night, Job 35. 10. Eph. 5. 19.

V. 5. *Alſo when they ſhall be afraid of that which is High, and fears ſhall be in the*

way, and the Almond-tree ſhall flouriſh, and the graſhopper ſhall be a burden, and deſire ſhall fail; becauſe man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the ſtreets.] Theſe are further degrees of the infirmities of old age when it grows now more decrepit, and neer unto the grave.

Alſo when they ſhall be afraid of that which is High] Either to go up to any high place, for fear of wearineſs, or want of breath, or giddineſs of brain, or diſability to hold out, or danger of falling from it; or leſt any thing that is over them ſhould fall down upon them and hurt them.

and fears ſhall be in the way] They ſhall go ſlowly and timorouſly, leſt they ſtumble at every ſtone or little bunch that is before them, leſt they be thruſt, and bruized by any that paſs by them, leſt wearineſs, ſickneſs, or ſome other infirmity come upon them, and hinder them in their Journey, leſt any thing run againſt them, and caſt them down, no way is ſo ſmooth and eaſie, wherein there will not be ſomething to affright them.

and the Almond-tree ſhall flouriſh,] This ſome take *literally*, when the Almond flouriſheth, in the beginning of the *ſpring*, when the graſhopper is fat in the middle of the *Summer*, then ſhall the deſires and delights (which in thoſe ſeaſons young men were wont

wont to take) fail them, they ſhall find no pleaſure in the moſt beautiful ſeaſons of the year. And ſo they make the ſpring to be deſcribed by the flowring of the Almond-tree, which doth firſt bring forth bloſſoms, Jer. 1. 11. and the Summer, by the fatneſs of the graſhopper, which then is moſt buſie. Others underſtand it of Averſation from ſenſual deſires, and from pleaſant fruits, as we find in Vatablus and Caietan, *Omnis Cibus ſuavis reprobabitur: flocci faciet coitum ob multam debilitatem.* But he ſeemeth to carry on the *Allegory*, and to compare the ſpeed which old age makes to overtake a man, unto the *Almond-tree*, which thruſts out her bloſſoms before any other tree. And as the flowers of the Almond are evident fore-runners of approaching Summer, ſo is old age of death, The moſt agreed ſenſe is, of *Gray hairs*, which are here compared to the white flowers of an Almond-tree, and are called *flores Cæmiterii.* So λευκανθὴς κάρη, in Sophocles, a white hoary head.

and the graſhopper ſhall be a burthen] The lighteſt hop of ſo little a creature ſhall be burthenſome to him, he is impatient of any the ſmalleſt weight. *Allegorically* may be underſtood, either the bowing down of his back

back, and the ſticking out of the *vertebræ* and bones thereof, which ſhall be a heavy weight unto him. Or, the *legs* which in a young man were as nimble as the legs of a graſhopper, ſhall now be heavy and ſwell'd with gowts and evil humours, ſo the Chaldee Paraphraſe, the former ſenſe is moſt general.

And Deſire ſhall fail] The Deſires of meat, drink, marriage, other pleaſures, whatever is delightful to the eyes, ears, palate, other ſenſes, ſhall all fail: A man ſhall abhor thoſe things which in youth his nature did greatly incline unto. Symmachus rendreth διαλυθῇ, ſhall be diſſolved, ſo ſome underſtand it of the mutual Confederation between the ſoul and the body which will be looſned and broken. The Septuagint read it, διασκεδᾶ ὁ κάππαρις; which word the Vulgar Latin retaineth, being a ſhrub, whoſe fruit, Galen ſaith, is good for a weak appetite; and Avicen, *ad irritandam Venerem*: conſonant whereunto is the Chaldee Paraphraſe. Athenæus numbreth *Capparis* amongſt other hot and ſalacious herbs.

Becauſe man goeth to his long home] *Ad Domum Mundi ſui, hic enim mundus non eſt ſuus*

ſuus. So Caietan wittily, though impertinently, *Domus Sæculi*, The *Long Home* is the Grave, whence men are never more to return into this world any more. It is called a mans own and proper houſe, Iſa. 14. 18. They promiſe themſelves Houſes for ever here, Pſ. 49. 12. but they have no abiding home but in the grave, Job 7. 10. The body is *domus pernoctationis*, but the Grave *Domus æternitatis.*

and the mourners go about the ſtreets.] Accompany the Herſe unto the Grave, Jer. 9. 17. Or his friends that viſit him, go from him mourning, and expecting his funeral. So we read of wailing in all Streets, Amos, 5. 16. Thoſe *hired mourners* who with muſick were wont to praiſe the party deceaſed, (whereunto alludeth the Evangeliſt, Matth. 9. 23.) we read of in Varro, lib. 6. de lingua latin. vid. Scalig. ib.

Now from theſe Infirmities we may be inſtructed to take care, that amidſt our own fears we may be guarded by Angels, and led in our way, and upheld by the Lords right hand, who hath promiſed to give his *Angels a charge to keep us in* our waies, and to make his *way plain* before our eyes, that we may have

have plain paths for our feet to walk in, and every high thing may be taken down, Pſ. 34. 7. Gen. 48. 16. Pſ. 91. 11. Pſ. 37. 24. Prov. 15. 19. Pſ. 27. 11. Pſ. 5. 8. Heb. 12. 13. Iſa. 40. 4. Luke 3. 4, 5, 6. 2 Cor. 10. 5. to be *trees of Righteouſneſs*, and then we ſhall bring forth fruit, and *flouriſh in old age*, Pſ. 92. 12, 13, 14. When we can bear no burthen our ſelves, If the Lord be ours, we may caſt all our burthens on him who careth for us, and will ſuſtain us, Pſ. 55. 22. And when *All* other *deſires fail*, Let us labour to be in ſuch a preparation for death, as that we may ſay with Old Simeon, *Lord now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace*; and with Paul, *I deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all*, Phil. 1. 23. And ſince the grave is our *longeſt home*, let our greateſt care be to have that a Houſe of Reſt and of Hope unto us; Chriſt by his lying in it hath ſweetned it unto Believers. Laſtly, let us ſo live, as that we may dye without fear, and they who bewail us, may not mourn as they who have no Hope, 1 Theſſ. 4. 13.

V. 6. *Or ever the ſilver Cord be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the Ciſtern.*] Some underſtand this verſe *literally*

terally. 1. Of the *ornaments.* 2. Of the more needful *inſtruments* of life, whether they be more obvious and eaſie to come by, as to draw water out of a Fountain with a pitcher; or more remote, which are not gotten without labour and coſt, as the drawing of water out of a deep Well with a wheel and a chain. And ſo the meaning runs thus, *Remember thy Creator in the daies of thy Youth*, before God ſtrip thee of thine *ornaments* wherein thou now rejoyceſt, Thy plate, chains, rings, jewels, bracelets, which will then be too heavy for thee to wear, *nec ſufferre potes majoris pondera gemmæ*: 2. Before he ſpoyl thee of the other Helps and *Commodities of life*, and make both thine *extraordinary ornaments*, and thine *ordinary utenſils* all uſeleſs unto thee: or haply in this ſenſe the former clauſe may relate unto *rich men*, Let not thy ſilver and gold bewitch thee: the later unto *meaner men*, Let not thy pitcher and thy wheel take thee off from minding the things of another and a better life. Others carry on the *Allegory*, making theſe things figurative and elegant expreſſions of death, and of thoſe evils which immediately forego it, to wit, the diſſolution of thoſe parts which are moſt vital: for death, as in the ſtorming or battering of a Garri-

Garriſon, doth firſt break and weaken the *out-works*, the bodily *limbs*, and outward *ſenſes*, and and after that ſets upon the *in-works*, and the *Vitals*. He here compareth *Life* unto a *Fountain*, or Well, out of which men draw water with a *Cord*, a bowl, or *bucket*, a *pitcher*, and a wheel. And as when theſe are broken we can draw water no more, ſo when the Vital parts are decayed, there is no hope longer to draw life into the body which is the Ciſtern. This Life he compares, for the *pretiouſneſs* of it, unto *ſilver* and *gold*, for the *weakneſs* and fragility of it, unto a *pitcher*, and for the *inſtability* and unſetledneſs of it, unto a wheel.

Now beſides this general proportion between life and theſe things as the figures of it, Interpreters do make the particulars here mentioned to anſwer unto ſome particulars in the vital parts of the body.

1. By the *ſilver Cord*, they underſtand the marrow or *pith of the back*, continued from the brain as it were in a cord or ſtring unto the bottom of the back-bones, and for the white colour of it, compared unto ſilver. It may alſo be applyed unto all the other *Sinews* and Ligaments of the body, which from the head, as

as the Fountain, convey ſenſe and motion upon the other parts. Hereby alſo may not unfitly be underſtood the chain and ſweet harmony of the Elements and humors in the body, which being preſerved in its due proportion, the body doth receive life from the Soul which is the Spring thereof, but being once diſſolved, life preſently faileth.

2. By the *Golden bowl*, they underſtand the *Meninx* or skin wherein the brain and vital powers thereof are contained as in a bowl. Others underſtand the *blood* which is in the heart, as in the pretious Fountain of life. Schindler rendreth it, *Scaturigo Auri* or *aurea*, & would have us thereby to underſtand the Law of God, which is compared unto Gold: but the word is elſewhere uſed to ſignifie a veſſel, Zach. 4. 2, 3.

3. By the *fountain*, we may underſtand thoſe *principal parts* from whence vital ſupplyes are drawn into the body, as from the *Head*, *Senſe*, and motion; from the *Heart*, ſpirits, and heat; from the *liver*, blood.

4. By the *pitcher*, and the *wheel*, thoſe *Inſtrumental* and ſubſervient *parts*, which from theſe convey thoſe ſupplyes into the ſeveral veſſels

veſſels of the body, as into a Ciſtern, as the *veins* blood from the Liver, the *arteries* ſpirits from the heart, the *Sinews* motion and ſenſe from the brain. By all which we ſhould learn to draw water of life out of *the Wells of Salvation*, that out of our belly may flow rivers of *living water*, through the continual ſupplyes of the Spirit of grace, that all our *ſprings* may be in Chriſt, and our life hidden with him in God, Iſa. 14. 3. & 66. 11, 12. Zach. 13. 1. John 4. 14. & 7. 38, 39.

In the ſecond Chapter Solomon had ſhewed us, The many choice varieties of pleaſure, riches, and other excellent outward bleſſings, in which he had ſought for contentment: and in this Chapter he hath in a moſt elegant Allegory ſhewed us how quickly old age doth break them all, and take away the comfort of them.

V. 7. *Then ſhall the Duſt return to the Earth, as it was: and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God who gave it.*] The *Duſt*, that is, The *body*, to ſhew the *Original* of it, Gen. 2. 7. The *weakneſs* of it, duſt is the weakeſt part of earth, Pſ. 103. 14. The baſeneſs and *vileneſs* of it, Job 4. 19. Phil. 3. 21. Gen. 18. 17. Job 30. 19. Our Original from the duſt,

duſt, Our Return unto the duſt, ſhould humble us, and make us vile in our own eyes, and ſhould warn us to make haſte to ſecure a better life before this be ended, and not to put off the endeavours towards it unto old age, which haply we may never attain unto, and if we do, will bring it ſelf work enough for us to do. Death is ſwift, and uncertain: Sin, the longer lived in, doth the more harden: Repentance is not in our Call or command when we pleaſe: and it is a work of the whole man, and the whole life: The work deferred will be greater, the time to do it in will be ſhorter, the ſtrength to do it by will be leſs, bodily infirmities will diſable ſpiritual actions. God will have leſs honour and ſervice from us, and we ſhall have more ſorrow, and leſs comfort. Therefore remember thy Creator, before the Duſt return to the Earth whence it came.

And the ſpirit ſhall return unto God who gave it.] The *Soul* is called a *Spirit*, to note the Immaterial ſubſtance of it, and its original, It came from him who is the *Father of Spirits*, Heb. 12. 9. Gen. 2. 7.

ſhall return unto God that gave it] *Ut ſtet Judicio ante Deum?* That it may appear before his Tribunal to be judged: as the Chaldee well paraphraſeth the place. As cer-

certainly as the body goes unto the duſt, ſo certainly the Soul returneth unto God to be judged. The godly are tranſlated into Paradiſe, into Abrahams boſome, into the condition of Juſt men made perfect, Luke 16. 22. and 23. 34. Heb. 12. 23. The wicked into the priſon of diſobedient ſpirits, reſerved there in Hell unto the Judgement of the great day, Luke 16. 23. 1 Pet. 3. 19.

V. 8. *Vanity of Vanities, ſaith the Preacher: All is Vanity.*] As Mathematicians having made their demonſtration, do then reſume their principal concluſion with a *quod erat demonſtrandum*: ſo here the Wiſe man having made a large and diſtinct demonſtration, That the Happineſs of man doth not ſtand in Any, or in All the Contents which the World can afford, both in regard of their *diſproportion* unto him, and their *diſcontinuance* with him, He doth hereby conclude his diſcourſe, 1. With a confident affirming what he had in the beginning undertaken to prove.

2. With a ſtrong and ſolid vindication thereof from any Cavils which might yet ariſe in the minds of men againſt it.

3. With a poſitive Concluſion containing the ſum of the whole Book, and the right means

means unto true Happineſs indeed.

V. 9. *And moreover, becauſe the Preacher was wiſe, he ſtill taught the people knowledge: yea he gave good heed, and ſought out, and ſet in order many Proverbs.* V. 10. *The Preacher ſought to find out Acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.*] Here Solomon commendeth the doctrine taught in this Book.

1. Becauſe it was the doctrine of a *penitent Convert*: for Repentance is an excellent means to diſcern and acknowledge ſpiritual truth, 2 Tim. 2. 25. James 1. 21.

2. Becauſe he was indued with *wiſdome* from God, ſo that they came and ſent from remote Countreys to hear him, 1 Reg. 4. 30, 31.

3. He uſed this wiſdome aright, he did not hide his talent in a napkin, but being taught of God himſelf, he alſo *taught the people*; and being converted himſelf, he ſought to convert others, and hereby ſhewed himſelf to be wiſe, and a penitent indeed, Pſ. 51. 12, 13. John 4, 28, 29. Joh. 1. 41, 45. Luke 2. 17. & 24. 33, 34, 35. Prov. 11. 30.

4. Becauſe he was exceeding conſiderate in the doctrine he taught, he *gave good heed unto it*, and weighed it in the ballance of wiſ-

wiſdome. He was exceeding diligent to learn of others, and to ſtudy himſelf. He was very perſpicacious and judicious, to ſelect choice matter to teach the people, 1 Pet. 1. 10.

5. Becauſe he had been exceeding ſucceſful in that diſquiſition, and had *compoſed* many excellent and wiſe *parables* for inſtruction in piety, vertue, and prudence, 1 Reg. 4. 32.

Whereupon he doth, ſixthly, commend the doctrine he taught from the nature and quality of it, 1. They were *Verba deſiderii*, pleaſant, delightful, acceptable words, ſuch as would be worthy of all entertainment, and miniſter ſolid comfort and refreſhment to the hearers, Pſal. 19. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 13.

2. They were *Verba Rectitudinis*, equal and right words, not looſe, fabulous, amorous, impertinent, which ſhould ſatisfie the itch of the ear, or tickle only a wanton fancy; but they were profitable and wholſome words; he did ſo ſeek to pleaſe men, as that it might be unto edification, and for their profit, 1 Cor. 10. 33. 2 Tim. 3. 16. words written to make men ſound and upright, Prov. 8. 8. to make their paths direct and ſtraight, without falſeneſſe or hypocriſie.

3. They

3. They were *Verba veritatis*, words of truth and infallible certainty, which would not deceive or miſguide thoſe that ſhould yield up themſelves to the direction of them, Pſal. 19. 9. Joh. 17. 17. A truth which is ſanctifying and ſaving, Epheſ. 1. 13. and in theſe reſpects moſt worthy of our Attention and belief. Many other books Solomon wrote, beſides thoſe which we now have mentioned, 1 Reg. 4. 32, 33. 2 Chron. 35. 4. See Joſephus Antiquit. lib. 8. cap. 2. Pineda de Rebus Solomonis, lib. 3. Sixtus Senenſis Biblioth, lib. 2.

V. 11. *The words of the wiſe are as goads, and as nailes faſtened by the Maſters of Aſſemblies, which are given from one ſhepherd.*] Before, he ſhewed the Internal Quality of the doctrine taught in the Church; here, he ſheweth the uſe, vertue, *Efficacy* and *Authority* thereof, and that by Two excellent *Similitudes*.

First, Of *Goades*, ſententious and conciſe parables and wiſe Sayings, have a notable *aeumen* in them to ſtirre up the heart unto attention, and to urge our ſluggiſh affections forward unto obedience, as the goad quickens the Oxe unto labour. This is the nature of ſound and ſpiritual doctrine, it ſearch-

ſearcheth, pricketh, and extimulateth the hearers of it unto Duty, doth not flatter any in their ſins, or ſecurity, but rouzeth them up, and awakeneth them, Pſal. 45 5. Iſa. 49. 2. Act. 2. 37. Heb. 4. 12. Shamgar with an Oxe goad ſlew ſixe hundred Philiſtines, Judg. 3. 31. Such is the power of the word to mortifie our luſts and corruption.

Secondly, Of *nayles* or *ſtakes*, by which we are faſtened and confirmed in our duties; a Metaphor either from *Smiths* and Carpenters, who faſten their work together with nailes; or from *Shepherds*, who faſten their hurdles and ſheep-pens together with ſtakes fixed in the ground, as likewiſe *Tents* were wont with cords and pins or ſtakes to be pitched, Iſa. 33. 20. & 54. 2. Iſa. 22. 23. elſewhere the word is compared unto an *Hammer*, whereby theſe nailes are thus faſtened, Jer 23. 20.

faſtened by the maſters of Aſſemblies] Or, *planted* and fixed; ſo the Apoſtle compareth preaching unto *planting*, 1 Cor. 3. 6. and the Word is called λόγον ἔμφυτον, an implanted, or *ingrafted word*, James 1. 21. Some read the words thus, *The words of the wiſe are as goades, and as nayles faſtned, They are the Maſters of Collections*, or the choyceſt

choyceſt and moſt principal Collections, unto which no other writing is to be compared, unto which all other learning is to be an handmaid, to wait upon it, & to be ſubſervient unto it: & thus they are a further commendation of the Scripture, from the excellency and preeminency of them above all other writings. Others thus; *As goads, and as nails fixed, quibus fiunt Coagmentationes* or *Collections*, ſo that the nails are the Maſters of the Collections, according to the former ſenſe; They who forſake the Word, have ſcatter'd, broken, disjoynted, diſcompoſed minds and affections; But the Word is of a knitting, and uniting vertue, Epheſ. 4. 12. 13, 14, 15, 16. Col. 2. 19. Others, by this expreſſion, underſtand thoſe who did collect the doctrine of the Holy men of God, and compoſe them in brief Summaries for the uſe of the Church: ſuch as were the *ſervants of Hezekiah*, Prov. 25. 1. like unto that Colledg of wiſe and learned men, whom Juſtinian the Emperour imployed in gathering into one Body or Pandect the Abridgment of the civil Laws: and likewiſe thoſe Doctors and Paſtours of the Church, whoſe work it is to faſten theſe nails in the hearts of the people by their Miniſtery; as Peter did in theirs to whom he preached, Act. 21. 37. Theſe are all very ſound & mutual conſiſtent ſenſes, which for ſubſtance agree

in one end to ſhew the *efficacy* of the word. The *Authority* whereof is confirmed by the next clauſe,

Which are given from one Shepherd] Though the Collectors, Expounders, & publiſhers of the word be *many*, ſome Prophets, ſome Apoſtles, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors & Teachers; yet the word it ſelf hath its original from *One principal Shepherd, the great Shepherd of the ſheep*, and Maſter of the houſe, He by his Spirit inſpired it, and by the ſame Spirit aſſiſteth his Miniſters in the diſpenſation of it; It is he that ſpeaketh in them & by them, ſo long as they keep to their commiſſion, and deliver nothing to the people but the counſel of God, and that which they have firſt received. Chriſt is here, as elſewhere, called a *Shepheard*, in purſuance of the Metaphor of *goads* and *ſtakes*, whereby *herdſmen* drive their oxen, and *ſhepherds* pitch their caules, John. 10. 11. Heb. 13. 20. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Hereby then is noted, The Divine *Authority* of the holy Scriptures delivered by Inſpiration unto the Pen-man thereof for the uſe of Church. The Spirit of Chriſt being in thoſe that wrote them, 1 Pet. 1. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 21. 2 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 3. Heb. 1. 1, 2. & 2. 3, 4. & 12. 25. And alſo the duty of Paſtors, to deliver nothing to the ſheep of Chriſt, but that which is his, and which cometh from him-

himſelf, Jer. 23. 22. Iſai. 21. 10. 1 Reg. 22. 14. Ezek. 2. 7, Acts 5. 20. & 20. 27. 1 Cor. Ezek. 3. 4. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 1 Joh. 1. 1.

V. 12. *And further, by theſe, my ſonne, be admoniſhed: of making many books there is no end, and much ſtudy is a wearineſſe of the fleſh*] *And further*, The Learned do by this word, joyn this verſe unto the three former, as an inference from them. And ſome render it thus. *Quod reliquum eſt*, *that which remains* as is the *reſult* of all this inquiry is this, That ſince the Preacher was wiſe and faithful, to ſeek out ſuch acceptable words, words of truth, conſonant to the doctrine of other wiſe men, effectual, as goads and nails, delivered from the great and chief ſhepherd of the flock: That I ſay which hereupon *remains* is this, *That thou my ſon be admoniſhed by theſe words*. Others begin the ninth Verſe thus, *And rather*, becauſe the Preacher was wiſe, &c. and then here repeat it, *And rather, I ſay, by theſe be admoniſhed*, rather by theſe doctrines of mine, then by any other humane and vain writings. *Amplius his, cave, quæras*, ſo Vatablus: and *quod plus eſt iſtis, cave ab iſto*; ſo Cajetan. Whatever others ſay, If they ſpeak not according unto theſe words, there is no wiſdom in them, and therefore no heed to be given unto them, Iſa. 8. 20. Theſe are the moſt excellent

Monitors thou canſt have; from theſe thou maiſt moſt richly be informed, and warned how to live, Pſal. 19. 11.

of making many books there is no end, &c.] An argument to enforce the exhortation, from the fruitleſsneſs and *vanity of other ſtudies*.

Firſt, There is no end of writing them; one refutes what another wrote, another vindicates what his adverſary diſliked. If happineſs were to be ſought for in humane writings; The Volums are ſo *infinite*, the opinions ſo endleſs and *various*, that it would be impoſſible for any man to find it out of them; when a man had with much curioſity, and continual reading, wearied himſelf, and pined his fleſh away, he would find it all an unprofitable, and impertinent labour, wearineſs to the body, without any ſatisfaction to the mind. Therefore let theſe words, ſo *few*, and yet ſo *full*, be thy counſellors: He that will not be admoniſhed by thoſe, ſhall never be ſatisfied with any others: He that refuſeth the Wheat, will be but choaked with the Chaff. Well may we ſay unto this one Shepherd, as Peter did, *Lord, to whom ſhall we go? Thou haſt the words of eternal life*, Joh. 6. 68. Theſe only are the Writings which make us wiſe unto ſalvation, and do furniſh us throughly unto all good works, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 17. others are *unſefull* in their

their order: Theſe only are the *Rule* of faith and life.

V. 13. *Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter; Fear God and keep his commandements: for this is the whole duty of a man*] Or, the whole end of the matter, or the Summe and ſubſtance of the whole matter is heard; The diſcourſe of mans happineſs, which in this Book I have undertaken, is at an end, no more need be ſaid of it; The ſumme of all is comprized in theſe two words, *Fear God, keep his Commandements*; this is all man needs, to lead an happy life.

Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter] This is an *Exordium* to ſtir up attention; I will in two words give you an Abridgement of all that can be ſaid; therefore take ſpecial heed to remember them. The Verſe begins with a great Letter in the Original, which is as Buxtorf, in his Tiberius notes, to excite the more heed and attention, the whole ſum of the duty of man, being contained in this ſhort ſaying, wherein he obſerveth the right *order*; for firſt, he begins with the *internal root* of all obedience and worſhip, which is, a filial, reverend, awful, and loving *fear of God* and his goodneſs in

the heart, Hoſ. 3. 5. Prov. 1. 7. Secondly, He proceedeth unto the *fruit*, which groweth out of this root of filial fear & love, ſhed abroad in the heart, which is an equal, uniform, conſtant, univerſal obſerving of his Commandements; of *all* of them without partiality; of all of them, as *his*, in obedience to his authority, in the acknowledgement of His Holineſs in them, and of his Dominion and Soveraignty over us: keep His Commandements out of fear to diſpleaſe him; out of conſcience to approve your ſelves unto him; out of care to bring glory to his Name, to teſtifie your thankfulneſs for his mercies, and your conformity to his Will.

Thus to fear God, and to keep his Commandements, is *the whole of man*; About this ſhould he ſpend all the ſtrength of his thoughts and cares; This is the ſumme of all, which man can, after all his writing, reading, ſtudying, inquiring, in order unto happineſs, attain unto; This is the whole happineſs of man, or, all the means which man can uſe to come unto happineſs at the laſt: This is the baſis, and bottom of all that perfection which man is capable of; It is the *whole duty of man*, and the *duty of all men* that will be happy, Jeb 28. 28.

This

This neceſſarily, takes in the Doctrine of faith in Chriſt, becauſe without him we can do nothing; by faith in him, the heart is purified to fear and love God; and by that fear and love, it is inclined to obey his Commandements, 1 Joh. 3. 5. Joh. 14. 22.

V. 14. *For God ſhall bring every work into judgement, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil*] This is a ſtrong motive unto fear and obedience: If the Excellency of the Doctrine do not perſwade, let the Terrour of Gods Judgement drive unto duty, *Becauſe he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteouſneſs*, Act. 17. 31. 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10. Rom. 2. 16. & 14. 10.

with every ſecret thing] It is the day of the Revelation of Gods righteous Judgement. Hypocriſie ſhall be diſcloſed, Sincerity ſhall be rewarded, becauſe nothing is hidden from him, Heb. 4. 13. All other things are vain, but it is not vain to fear the Lord. They that do good, their works will follow them into Heaven; and they that do evil, their works will hunt and purſue them into Hell.

FINIS.